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THE

PATRIARCHAL AGE;

OR

THE STORY OF JOSEPH.

17

ORIGINALLY PREPARED FOR THE PUPILS IN THE PRIMARY
DEPARTMENT OF THE GIRARD COLLEGE FOR ORPHANS,
AND NOW PUBLISHED FOR THE USE OF OTHER
YOUNG PERSONS.



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“My desire is, that all the instructors and teachers in the college shall take pains to instill into the minds of the scholars, the purest principles of morality ; so that on their entrance into active life, they may from inclination and habit, evince benevolence toward their fellow creatures, and a love of truth, sobriety and industry.”

“I would have them taught facts and things, rather than words and signs ; and especially, I desire that, by every proper means, a pure attachment to our republican institutions, and to the sacred rights of conscience, as guarantied by our happy constitutions, shall be formed and fostered in the minds of the scholars.”—*Will of Stephen Girard.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE matter of the following pages was prepared for a class of boys, between the ages of nine and eleven years, and was orally explained to them, excepting the notes, very nearly as it now appears, in a course of Sunday-School lessons in the spring and summer of 1848.

It was the object of the writer to impart to his youthful charge as great a variety of instruction, suitable to their age and condition, as was practicable and proper in an effort of that nature. The language employed throughout is colloquial, without pretension to elegance or greater accuracy of expression, than is usual in familiar didactic conversation with very young persons.

The extracts on a preceding page will account for the introduction of some topics not common in Sunday-School instruction.

The notes, which were collected and added afterward, were intended for the instruction of more

advanced pupils. Some of them, were selected with especial reference to the future pursuits of the youth, then in the writer's view.

Although quite miscellaneous and not always very closely connected with the narrative, they may be interesting, and in some degree useful to juvenile readers. They will serve also as hints to those who may use the volume as an aid to oral instruction, according to the original design. They have therefore been retained.

The volume is now published with the hope that it may be found useful beyond the circle for which it was originally intended.



**LAND OF PROMISE, OR
LAND OF CANAAN**
Adapted to the Histories of
ABRAHAM, ISAAC & JACOB

SEIDON OR ZADON



FIGURE 2. LAND OF CANAAN

THE STORY OF JOSEPH.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory

remarks.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS:—

You remember, I have no doubt, the principal events in the history of Joseph—I read it to you lately, and some of you have probably read it yourselves. It is a very interesting story. There is scarcely any to be found in the Bible which is more so, and I know of none in any other book that can justly be compared with it.

But many persons who read this story and admire it, do not consider how much can be learned from it, and it is not to be expected that boys so young as you are, should know much more than the story itself. I wish now to tell you some things about Joseph and the times in which he lived—about his ancestors and relations, and the men with whom he mingled, which will help you to read his history with more pleasure and more profit.

The Bible,

the only true history.

The Bible* is a very interesting book. Some parts of it were written before any other book we have.† It contains the only true history of the first ages of the world. We could get along much better without all other books, than without the Bible. If you wish to know what a blessing it is to have the Bible, you should read or listen to some true account of those nations and people who have not the Bible. Such nations are in a sad state of ignorance about other things besides religion—such as Geography. There are many boys in this College, that know more of Geography than the most learned men in China, unless they have been taught it by Americans or Europeans.

Besides this, those nations which have not the Bible, have cruel and wicked practices. They do things very often and very generally, which we should think dreadful—such as would not be al-

* The word *Bible* signifies *book*, and it has been used to denote the Holy Scriptures almost ever since the days of the Apostles.—The word *Scriptures* signifies *writings*, but we apply it usually, only to the writings contained in the Bible. (See Matth. xxi. 42. xxii. 29. John, v. 39. Acts, xviii. 28. Rom. xv. 4. 2Tim. iii. 16. 1Pet. ii. 6. James, ii. 8.)

† The earliest Gentile writer we have, is a historian of Phœnicia, a native of Berytus, now called Beyroot, and his name was Sanchoniathon. It is supposed he lived about 1245 years before Christ, in the time of Gideon, a judge of Israel, (see Judges, chapters vi., vii. and viii.) Only some fragments of his history have been preserved, although his work was translated from the Phœnician language into Greek, by Philo Biblius, in the time of the Roman Emperor, Adrian.

The Pentateuch.

A Roll.

lowed in any country where the Bible is known and revered.

This shows that it is a very useful and profitable thing to study the Bible, and we ought to get from it all the useful knowledge we can; and be very thankful to God for giving us our birth in this land, instead of one of the heathen countries, where there is so much ignorance and cruelty.

The history of Joseph, you know, is contained in the first book of the Bible. We call it the Book of Genesis*—some call it the first book of Moses. The first five books, which we call Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, were written by Moses—and these five books taken together, are often called the Pentateuch. This word *Pentateuch*, is made up of two Greek words—*Pente* which signifies *five*, and *Teuchos* which signifies book or roll.†

* The Book of Genesis contains the history of the Patriarchal dispensation, and extends through a period of more than 2300 years. The other books of the Old Testament, except the Book of Job, fall chiefly within the Levitical or legal dispensation.

† Several sorts of materials were used formerly for making books: plates of lead, copper, the bark of trees, brick, stone, wood. (Job xix: 23, 24.) The leaves of the palm tree and the Egyptian papyrus, from which the word *paper* is derived, were afterward used. By degrees wax, then leather was introduced, especially the skins of goats and sheep, of which, at length, parchment was prepared. Then linen, silk, horn, and lastly, paper came into use. The first books were in the form of blocks and tables, or tablets of terra cotta. Dr. Layard's discoveries at Nimroud throw much light on this subject. As flexible matter came to be used, it was found more convenient to make them in the form of rolls. These were composed of several sheets fastened to each other and rolled

The parentage

of Joseph.

The history of Joseph begins in the thirty-seventh chapter of the first of these five books, and it continues with some interruption to the end of it.

The things which are recorded in the book of Exodus, or the second book of the Pentateuch, did not begin to come to pass till Joseph was dead (Exod. i. 8,) so that nearly all we know of Joseph is contained in the last fourteen chapters of the Book of Genesis.

It is scarcely necessary for me to tell you the name of Joseph's father and grandfather. They were both very celebrated men, and their names occur very often in the Bible, and I shall have occasion to mention them frequently. But you will not so easily tell me how long ago Joseph was born, and how many years ago the things told of him in

upon a stick; the whole making a kind of column or cylinder. Rolls appear to have been in use among the Jews, Grecians and Romans till some centuries after Christ. The copies of the Old Testament in the Jewish synagogues are to this day scrolls of parchment rolled upon sticks. The shape which now obtains among us, though little known to the ancients, is said to have been invented by Attalus, King of Pergamus, to whom some ascribe the manner of preparing the parchment. A learned man at Athens, whose name was Philatius, first taught the use of glue to fasten the several leaves together, on which account a statue was erected to him. Our books are of different sizes and shapes—a book in folio (usually written *fol.*) has the pages formed by a sheet of paper doubled once. This is a book of the largest size. A book in quarto (*4to.*) has the sheet doubled twice, making four leaves—a book in octavo (*8vo.*) has the sheet folded into eight leaves; a book in duodecimo (*12mo.*) folded into twelve leaves, etc. A pamphlet is a small book—properly a book unbound, only stitched.

Date of the event.

Christian era.

the Bible happened. Yet it is important to find out as near as we can, when the things we are reading about, happened, and to remember the time.

I will therefore begin by telling you the time when Joseph was born, as nearly as learned men have been able to determine it; and from that we shall be able to ascertain the date of the events we are to speak of. The time was about 1745 years before our Lord Jesus Christ was born.

You know we reckon our years from his birth. We call the *era* or age in which we live, the Christian era, and the year which we now reckon (1848) is the 1848th year since the birth of Christ.* Now I have told you that Joseph was born about 1745 years before Christ, and we live 1848 years after Christ was born, and if we add these two numbers together, it will show us how long it is since Joseph was born. If you do this right, you will find that Joseph was born about 3593 years ago.

But the Bible does not give any account of Joseph until he was seventeen years old—so if we wish to know when the story begins, we must deduct 17 years from 3593 years, and this will show that our story commences with an event which occurred about 3576 years ago. We ought also to

* The birth of Christ is called the *epoch* at which the Christian era began.

Abraham.

The land of Canaan.

know something about the countries in which Joseph lived, and in which the things happened that are related of him. But before I tell you about this matter, I will go back a little and tell you something of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

His great-grandfather's name, you know, was Abraham. This man was born in Ur, a city of Chaldea;* but he did not always live in the country of his birth, nor did he afterward live constantly at the same place. He moved from place to place, but for the most part he lived near Canaan,† which is also called the land of Israel, and sometimes the land of promise, and sometimes Palestine.‡ We will look at it on the map.

* Chaldea was bounded on the north by Mesopotamia; by Susiana, a province of Persia, on the east; by Arabia Deserta on the west, and by the Persian Gulf on the south. Ur was situated, as it is supposed, between Nisibis and the Tigris. It was the capital of a district which had been inhabited by a colony of Shem's descendants, through Arphaxad, for more than 400 years after the flood. This tract of country is called in the Scriptures "the land of Shinar." It is a beautiful valley. The great river Tigris flows through it, from the mountains of Armenia to the Persian Gulf. It was afterward called Babylonia. The Tower of Babel was built in the southern part of this valley, and the imperial city of Babylon. Haran, the city to which Abraham went from Ur, was in the north-west of Mesopotamia. In after times the city became famous for the defeat of Crassus by the Parthians (Gen. xi. 31; Acts vii. 2, 4.)

† He changed his dwelling place at least five times in thirty-five years, after he left his native country. The name Canaan is supposed by many to signify "the low country," in opposition to Aram or Syria, "the high country." It signifies also *a trader*. It was settled by Canaan, the youngest son of Ham, nearly 300 years before the call of Abraham.

‡ Palestine (or Palisthan) is supposed to signify Shepherd-land.

Boundaries of	Country.
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Observe the boundaries of this country. On the north is Syria,* which is several times mentioned in the New Testament, as you will see by referring to Matt. iv. 24; Luke ii. 2; Acts xv. 23, 41; xviii. 18; xx. 3; xxi. 3; Gal. i. 21. I read to you not long ago, the story of Naaman the Syrian. You will find it in 2d Kings, chap. 5. He was a captain of the armies of the king of Syria. The same story is referred to in Luke iv. 27. On the east also, is a part of Syria and a part of Arabia, called Arabia Deserta. There is also a chain of mountains on the east, which serves as a boundary. On the south is Arabia Petrea (or the Rocky,) and on the west it is bounded by the Mediterranean sea.

The name Palestine, by which we often call it, does not occur in the New Testament. The Jews did not like that name; it was given to the country by the Greeks and Romans, who took it from one

Herodotus, the Greek historian, calls the country Syria-Palestine, to distinguish it from Cœle-Syria or Hollow-Syria, which lies northward of Mount Libanus. It is called "the pleasant land" in Ps. cvi. 24; Dan. viii. 9; and is described as such by Moses in Deut. viii. 7, 9—xi. 9, 11; also by Rabshakeh, an Assyrian general (Is. xxxvi. 17.)

*Syria is a large country. It extends from the Mountains of Amanus and Taurus on the north, to Egypt and Arabia Petrea on the south, and from the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the river Euphrates and Arabia Deserta on the east; so that it really includes Palestine. It is called *Aram* in Hebrew. In the Scriptures, the different provinces of Syria are often designated by the capital city of the province: as Syria of Damascus, Syria of Emoth, Syria of Rohob. But the geographies divide Syria into three parts, viz: Syria Proper, or High Syria; Cœle Syria, or Low Syria, or Hollow Syria; and Syria Palestine.

The Land of Promise.

The Holy Land

of the nations or people who lived on the sea coast. I mean the Philistines. You find the name *Palestina*, it is true, in the English translation of Exodus xv. 14, and also of Isaiah xiv. 29, 31; but the original word is *Peleset* or *Pheleseth*, and it is applied to the land of the Philistines.

You observe on this map the country is called the Land of Promise. It was so called while the Canaanites* inhabited it, because God had promised Abraham to give it to him and to his posterity (Gen. xvii. 8,) and God made the same promise to Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 3,) and to Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13.) It was called the land of Israel from the Israelites, after they inhabited it: this name is given to it in Matt. iii. 21. It is now frequently called the Holy Land, and the reason which most people have for giving it that name is, that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in that land and preached and suffered there. This is sufficient to explain the different

* It is remarkable that the sons of Canaan (who was the youngest son of Ham) were eleven in number, which (with himself enumerated) correspond to the number of the tribes of Israel, by whom they were afterward expelled. The names of their families or nations are enumerated in Gen. x. 15, 19, and the boundaries of the country they occupied are described. They were the Sidonians, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites or Perizzites, Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, Zemarites and Hamathites. Canaanites was a general name given to the whole, from Canaan, the father of them all. Mr. Bryant says the Phœnicians, properly so called, were the descendants of Esau, and that they emigrated from the neighborhood of Mount Seir to the coast of the Mediterranean sea, and thus came to be regarded as descendants of Canaan.

The father

of Joseph.

names which you see given to this same country on these three maps. It was in this country that pious Abraham* lived. When he was very old, he had a son, whom he called Isaac, and he lived in the same country† after the death of Abraham. Isaac was a very pious man also, and God protected him and taught him in a very especial manner. Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob, but Jacob's name was afterward changed to Israel (Gen. xxxii. 28,) and he was the father of Joseph.

At the time these three men, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived, most men did not know much about God, and had very wrong ideas of worshipping him; but God gave these three peculiar know-

* It has been said that Abraham was skilled in many sciences, and wrote several books. Josephus informs us that he taught the Egyptians arithmetic and geometry, and according to other writers, he instructed the Phœnicians or Canaanites, as well as the Egyptians, in astronomy. But the Bible makes much less account of knowledge than of goodness. Many of the inhabitants of the East Indies, not only Christians and Mahometans, but Indians and Infidels, have a traditionary knowledge of Abraham, and speak highly in commendation of him.

† Isaac was born at Gerar, in the land of the Philistines. This place is south-west from Jerusalem, and not far from Gaza. The most remarkable event in his life, was the offering of him by his father as a sacrifice (Gen. xxii. 1—14.) This transaction took place when Isaac was at least twenty-five years old, and as some think, thirty-three. He was old enough to bear the wood for the burnt-offering (Gen. xxii. 3.) This shows how perfectly submissive he was to the will of his father; because he made no resistance, although he had the size and strength of a man. This reminds us of the submission of the Lord Jesus Christ, when a band of men and officers were sent to take him, although he had the power to make them fall to the ground by a word. (John xviii. 3—6.)

Riches of Abraham,

Isaac and Jacob.

ledge, and they were wiser and better than most other men of that time.

I told you a little while ago, that Abraham did not constantly live at one place, and now I may say the same of Isaac and Jacob. They were all very rich men, they had a great many men-servants and maid-servants. You may form some idea of the number that Abraham had, from the fact, that he armed three hundred and eighteen trained men that were born in his house, when he went to rescue Lot* (Gen. xiv. 14.) They had also a great many sheep, oxen, cows, and other cattle. But they did not live as rich men do now. Rich men now commonly live in fine houses in some city, or town, or pleasant place in the country, but they moved about slowly from place to place through the country, with their wives and children and grand-children and servants and cattle.†

Some of you may wish to ask why they moved about so constantly: It was not for pleasure chiefly, but to find good pasture for their cattle,

* Esau had four hundred men with him, when he went to meet Jacob. (Gen. xxxii. 6; xxxiii. 1.)

† In many parts of the East, particularly in the deserts of Arabia and the mountainous regions of Syria and Palestine, there are to be found, even at this day, people who live in this way. The pastoral life of the descendants of Shem is strongly marked in the prophecy of Noah (Gen. ix. 26, 27), by the words "tents of Shem"—and such it remains to the present day throughout their midland settlements in Asia.

Use of money

in Abraham's time.

for they were herdmen or shepherds (Gen. xlvii. 3.)

You may think this very strange, because I told you just now that they were rich men, and rich men now are not herdmen. But it, was not so then. In those days he was the richest man who had the greatest number of children and servants and cattle.

It is true, money had been invented before Abraham's time, for in the Bible we are told Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver and gold (Gen. xiii. 2;) and Abimelech, king of Gerar, gave to Abraham, as Sarah's brother, a thousand* pieces of silver (Gen. xx. 16.) But you must not think it was just such money as we use. At first, money

* History does not inform us who invented arithmetic, nor the time of its invention. Some ascribe it to the Tyrians, but it is evident that it was known before they existed. The antediluvians used numbers, and probably computed by tens as we do. (Jude xiv.) The directions given to Noah for building the ark leave no room to doubt that he had a knowledge of numbers and measures (Gen. vi.) It is plain too, Rebecca and her relatives had a knowledge of large numbers (Gen. xxiv. 60,) and it appears highly probable that the four fundamental rules of arithmetic were known in very early ages of the world. It does not appear from the Bible that silver was in use before the deluge, although brass and iron were known at that time (Gen. iv. 22.) This metal has been much employed for sacred uses. The silver mines of Peru, supposed to be the richest in the world, were discovered by accident in 1545. The exhalations from those mines render the working of them very dangerous. Gold is found in almost all parts of the earth—in North and South America, in Hungary, in Africa and the East Indies. It has usually been found in mines of considerable depth, mixed with other mineral and metallic matter, from which it is afterward separated by a tedious process. It is sometimes met with in the sand and mud of rivers and torrents.

How sums of

money were paid.

passed by weight: Accordingly we are told, when Abraham bought of Ephron a field, before Mamre in Machpelah,* he *weighed* him four hundred shekels of silver current with the merchant (Gen. xxiv. 16.) Now, you know, money is stamped and it passes commonly by *tale*—or by counting the number of pieces—not by weight, although the money of foreign countries sometimes is weighed. The later invention of stamping money was designed to save the trouble of weighing and assaying, or trying the goodness of the metal which is used for money.†

I hope you now understand what I intended when I called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob rich

* This is the first example of the purchase and transfer of land we read of in any book. Afterward, under the Jewish commonwealth, the land given to each tribe was so limited or entailed upon their families, that it could not be sold otherwise than to be redeemed at the next Jubilee (Lev. xxv. 13.) Then it became necessary to put contracts of sale into writing (Jer. xxxii. 9.) Our Saxon forefathers, it is said, derived their manner of conveyances from these two precedents. When they sold absolutely, they did it usually without writing. This was called *folk-land*. If they sold with some special limitation, they did it by writing. This was called *Boke-land*.

† The right of coining money belongs to the king or the government of the country, and no one government or king has a right to coin money for another; or counterfeit the coin of another king or country. In this country, the Congress of the United States alone has the power to coin money. In other countries it has long been the custom to stamp money with the figure of the king or prince. The piece of tribute money which the Herodians showed to our Saviour had the image and superscription of Cæsar stamped on it (Matt. xxii. 16—21,) and by their producing such a piece of money, they acknowledged Cæsar's authority over them; because if he had not such authority, he had no right to make money coined by his authority pass current among them. This shows you the force of our Saviour's answer—"Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," etc.

Mode of living.

Wells.

men. They moved about from place to place in a large company, as I have described; the father or grandfather or great-grandfather was the ruler of the whole family or tribe. All were obliged to obey him. Sometimes they remained several days or even weeks at the same place, in a valley perhaps, or near a forest or a mountain, but usually in the neighborhood of good water for themselves, their company, and their flocks and herds.

You must not suppose this a matter of small consequence, because wells were not common in those days, although there were some. In the gospel by John, mention is made of Jacob's well near Sychar, in Samaria (John iv. 4, 5,) and Abraham's servants digged wells for him in Gerar, which the Philistines stopped up (Gen. xxvi. 15.)

Some of you may be thinking how they could find comfortable accommodations at such places—for they could not expect to find inns or taverns or boarding-houses; there were no such accommodations for travelers in those early times; yet there were many clans or tribes of people in ancient times that lived in the same way, and this manner of life is sometimes called *Nomadic* or *Pastoral*, and the people who live in this way are sometimes called *Nomades* or *Nomads*. Some such lived in Asia near the Caspian Sea.* Others lived in Afri-

* The Tartars (or Tatars as some call them) live chiefly in

ca, and were called *Numidæ* or Numidians. But how, you inquire, were they sheltered from the dews at night and from the rain and the cold. I will tell you;—they carried a great many tents with them, which they could raise upon the ground like little huts. This action of raising a tent is called in English, pitching a tent.* and you will find it often mentioned in the Bible. Thus (in Gen. xii. 8,) we are told that on one occasion Abraham pitched his tent between Bethel and Hai. Lot at another time pitched his tent toward Sodom, (Gen. xiii. 12.) Isaac pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar (Gen. xxvi. 17.) Jacob, at one time, pitched his tent before Shalem, a city of Shechem in the land of Canaan (Gen. xxxiii. 18.) You know that armies lodge under tents even in our times. The wandering Arabs and Tartars always lodge under

tents; wandering in vast hordes, from place to place, in search of food for their horses, camels and sheep; on the milk and flesh of which they subsist. The Tartars are celebrated horsemen and ferocious warriors; so much so, that “to catch a Tartar” is a proverbial phrase, alluding not only to the difficulty of the undertaking, but also to the bad consequences of success—of being caught by the person pursued.

* The tent, as it is now made in the East, is a rude structure, consisting generally, of a row of stakes twelve or fifteen feet high, stuck into the ground and converging at the top. On these are laid others in a horizontal position, and over the whole is thrown a covering of skins or of goat’s or camel’s hair to turn off the rain—and kept firm by having its extremities stretched down by cords, fastened to hooked wooden pins driven into the ground. The poles are full of hooks on which are hung the few utensils they need. Its figure is generally oblong, not very unlike the inverted hull of a ship. It is sometimes divided into different apartments by dropping a curtain.

Jacob's children.The twelve patriarchs.

tents, and the Hebrews when they came out of Egypt, under the conduct of Moses, lodged under tents in the desert, forty years. You may suppose that kind of shelter would not be very comfortable, but you must remember that the climate of Palestine, Arabia and Egypt,* is milder in the winter than ours.

In this way, these three good men lived. Jacob, the father of Joseph, was a very mild and peaceable man, and very devout also, and God took care of him and guided him and taught him in a very remarkable way. His family was very large. He had thirteen children, twelve sons and one daughter. These sons were afterward called the twelve patriarchs (Acts vii. 8,) and became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, so often spoken of in the Bible. (Matt. xix. 28; Acts xxvi. 7; James i. 1; Rev. vii. 4, 8; Ezek. xlviii.)†

The names of his sons are all found in the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, and in the first two verses of the second chapter of the first book of Chronicles, and also in the first five verses of the first

* In Egypt, for example, winter is the most agreeable season; for in winter the fields of Egypt are much more pleasant to the eye than in summer. You must remember also, that when people who live in our latitude are beginning to sow and plant, the harvest in Egypt is about ready to be gathered, and at the time when the ground, with us, is covered with ice, and vegetation is dead, the prairies of Egypt are covered with verdure and flowers.

† The twelve tribes were reckoned differently at different periods, according to the different objects in view.

The names of
Joseph's brethren.

chapter of Exodus. They are Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin. His daughter's name was Dinah. They were all born in Padan-Aram, except Benjamin, and they all died in Egypt. Joseph, whose history we intend to study, was the youngest but one, of all these children.

The history of Joseph begins in the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis. The thirty-eighth chapter contains nothing about Joseph, and you will pass over that in reading. You must think of Joseph as a youth seventeen years old, for, as I told you before, at that age the story begins. Jacob was very old when Joseph was born, and therefore Joseph is called the son of his old age, and for that reason Jacob (or Israel as we may call him) loved him more than all his other children (Gen. xxvii. 3.) But Zebulon, Issachar and Dinah were not much older than Joseph, and Levi was only six years older.* This has induced some learned men to think that the reason why Jacob loved Joseph so much was, that he was *a wise son*, and was quiet and sedate, and they say that the words of Moses may mean *wise son*, as well as *son of his old age*. In fact, Jacob was ninety-two years old at that

*Jacob was eighty-two years old when Levi was born, as some think, and if so, Levi was ten years older than Joseph.

 Extreme age of

 Joseph's ancestors.

time, and of course, one hundred and nine years old when Joseph was seventeen years old. He lived thirty-eight years after that, or until he was one hundred and forty-seven years old, and until Joseph was fifty-four or fifty-five years old. Joseph lived until he was one hundred and ten years old, that is fifty-five or fifty-six years after the death of his father. Some of you are thinking perhaps that Jacob and even Joseph lived to a very great age, and very few persons, at least in this country, live as long as even Joseph lived. But Isaac, the grandfather of Joseph, lived one hundred and eighty years, and Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years. Yet there was one man alive in Jacob's time, who lived much longer than either. Can you tell his name?

All. Methuselah!

Oh no—Methuselah died long before Abraham was born. Heber* is the name of the man I refer

* The name Heber signifies "he that passes over." Dr. Hales says he was reckoned the father of the Hebrews, or of those that retained the pure Hebrew dialect, nearest to the primeval language, after the confusion of tongues. The Phœnicians, and their colonists, the Carthaginians, it is said, spoke the Hebrew language or a dialect scarcely varying from it. But the original Phœnicians, as some suppose, came from Edom, near the Arabians and Amalekites—and Edom was settled by Esau, the brother of Jacob. We should naturally expect that the descendants of the two brothers would speak the same or a very similar language. It is remarkable too, that the Carthaginians first called their chief city *Bosra*, which was the chief city of Edom. (See Isaiah lxiii. 1.) The sons of Canaan are mentioned in Genesis x. 15, and there is no resemblance between the name of any one of them, and the

Age of Heber.

Death of Abraham.

to, and he lived longer than any other man, so far as we know, who was born after the flood. You will find his name in the thirty-fifth verse of the third chapter of Luke's gospel. As learned men reckon, Heber was born sixty-seven years after the flood, and he lived four hundred and sixty-four years and even survived Abraham, although Abraham did not die until Jacob was fifteen years old, that is, until Jacob was almost as old as Joseph was at the time our story begins.

As it will be useful to you to know something of the longevity of the ancients, before we proceed with the history of Joseph, I will say a few things to you on this subject. Do you know what longevity means?

David. Yes sir, longevity means length or duration of life.

Very good, but more generally we use this word in the sense of great length of life. Now turn to the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses of the third chapter of Luke, and you will find that Jacob was a descendant of Heber. Now count all the names between Jacob and Heber. How many are there George?

George. Seven, sir.

name *Phœnix* or *Phœnician*. Besides the name *Phœnix* or *Phœnician* signifies red, and that is the signification of the name *Edom*.

Relationship between

Jacob and Heber.

Now add Jacob's name, and you will find he is in the eighth degree of descent from Heber. Repeat these names, George.

George. 1, Jacob; 2, Isaac; 3, Abraham; 4, Thara; 5, Nachor; 6, Sarach; 7, Ragan; 8, Phalec; 9, Heber.

Right—now observe we have no way of expressing in English directly, the relationship between Jacob and Heber, except that I just now employed. But we can say that Nachor was the great-great-grandfather of Jacob, and Heber was the great-great-grandfather of Nachor, and so it appears, that Heber was the great-great-grandfather of Jacob's great-great-grandfather: Yet Heber lived long enough to see Jacob!

I told you just now, that Heber was born sixty-seven years after the deluge, which occurred in Noah's day, but Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the deluge. Now can you tell me how long Noah lived after Heber was born? Take sixty-seven years from three hundred and fifty, and how many remain?

All. Two hundred and eighty-three.

You are right. Accordingly Heber might have told Abraham, Isaac and even Jacob, what he heard Noah say about the ark and the flood, and those wonderful things which happened when the old world was destroyed by a deluge of waters, and

Methusaleh and Noah

contemporary 600 years.

not only those, but a great many other things that happened before that; for Noah was in his six hundredth year at the time of the deluge.

A little while ago, you mentioned the name of Methuselah, and I told you that he died long before Abraham was born. Now I will tell you something more about him. But first let me ask you how long he lived? You will find the answer in Gen. v. 27.

William. Nine hundred and sixty-nine years.

Well, he died, as learned men conclude, just before the flood came, and of course he was cotemporary, or lived with Noah about six hundred years; and so it follows that Noah could have told Heber, not only what he had seen, but a great deal that Methuselah had told him. Now I have another question to ask you. How long before the flood, was Methuselah born? You may answer, William.

William. If Methuselah* was nine hundred and sixty-nine years old when he died, and if he died

*The name Methuselah means, *at his death it* (viz. the flood) *shall be sent*. Enoch, the father of Methuselah, foresaw the flood, and he gave this name to his son to foretell that event. God prolonged the life of this man, beyond all others, to show perhaps how slow he is to execute severe judgments; and how pitiful and long suffering he is toward even very wicked men. (2 Pet. iii. 9; Ex. xxxiv. 6; Numb. xiv. 18; Ps. lxxxvi. 15.) The earth had become very corrupt and was filled with violence long before the flood, and we may reasonably believe that idolatry also preceded the deluge. (Gen. vi. 11, 12, 13—5, 6, 7.)

Tradition through Methuselah,Noah, Heber and Abraham.

just before the flood, he must have been born about nine hundred and sixty-nine years before the flood.

That is very plain. Now I will tell you one other thing. Methuselah was born two hundred and forty-three years before Adam died, and we have no reason to believe that they were strangers to each other,* and as Methuselah lived six hundred years after Noah was born, he could have told Noah what he had heard Adam say, and then Noah could have told the same things to Heber, and then again, Heber could have repeated them to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In this way knowledge might have been handed down from the earliest times which are spoken of in the Bible, from Adam to Jacob, and then by Jacob it could have been imparted to his sons. Knowledge handed down in this way is called tradition. Repeat now the names of the persons I have just spoken of—David may repeat them.

* Some learned men have conjectured that mankind before the flood lived in one community, in the south-western portion of Asia—not in different nations remote from each other as now. Several reasons are given for this opinion, one of which is derived from Hebrews xi. 7. Noah's conduct in preparing the ark, and his preaching, it is said, could not have given warning to mankind if they had lived scattered as now. Others have imagined that the number of the inhabitants of the world at the time of the deluge was very great. Several authors who have made calculations of it, suppose that upon a moderate computation there were on the earth, at that time, at least two millions of millions of souls, which is more than a thousand times as many as the present population of the world. This opinion is by no means probable.

Preservation of

religious knowledge.

David. Adam, Methuselah, Noah, Heber, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Yes. Only three persons were necessary to pass knowledge from Adam to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. You never thought of this before, I presume. But I hope you will remember it. Here are two little tables I have made for you, according to the chronology of the Hebrew Bible, which I wish you to study. Now observe the wonderful providence of God in preserving religious knowledge in those early times, when it could not be committed to writing. If the lives of men had been shortened to seventy or eighty, or even one hundred years in those times, this knowledge would have been entirely lost or miserably corrupted long before the time when Abraham lived. A little before Abraham's time, the world began to fall fast into idolatry, (Josh. xxiv. 2,*) and the true knowledge of God was preserved for many centuries, only among the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—and even now, far the greater part of the nations of the earth, and some that are very an-

* Yet there were other good men then alive, among whom were Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, and Melchizedeck. Some Jewish writers suppose Melchizedeck to have been Shem; but this is not probable. The kind of idolatry most prevalent in the time of Abraham is called *Sabaism*. It consisted in the worship and adoration of the stars, or as the Scriptures call it, Baal, Astaroth and the hosts of the heavens. Job (xxxi. 26, 28) alludes to this form of idolatry, and he speaks of it as punishable by the magistrate; although he declares himself free from that sin.

TABLE I.—From the Creation to the Flood, exhibiting (1) the number of years that each patriarch was cotemporary with the others—(2) the years of the world in which each was born and died—(3) the age of each.

	Adam.	Seth.	Enos.	Cainan.	Mah'el.	Jared.	Enoch.	Meth'ah	Lam'ch.	Noah.	Sh'm,&c	ANNO MUNDI.		
												Born.	Died.	Age.
Adam	930	912	905	910	895	962	365	969	777	950	600	1	930	930
Seth	800	807	815	840	830	365	300	687	1140	1042	130	130	1042	912
Enos	695	717	745	775	765	365	300	782	1235	1140	235	235	1235	905
Cainan	605	647	680	717	703	365	300	874	1280	1285	325	325	1285	910
Mahaleel	535	582	615	650	635	365	300	959	1422	1422	460	460	1422	895
Jared	470	507	540	575	560	365	300	1056	1487	1487	622	622	1487	962
Enoch	308	365	365	365	365	365	300	1156	1556	1556	874	874	1556	365
Methuselah	243	355	453	548	603	735	300	1256	1651	1651	1056	1056	1651	969
Lamech	56	168	266	361	416	548	113	1356	2006	2006	1556	1556	2006	777
Noah			84	179	224	366		100	95	450	600		2156	950
Shem, &c.														600
The Flood														

This table shows how many opportunities there were of comparing and correcting different accounts. The perpendicular column of names shows how many were cotemporary with generations before them, and the figures in the horizontal line denote the number of years common to both—and the two tables show that three narrations only were necessary to bring the account of the Creation to the fathers of the Hebrews. Adam could narrate to Enos, Cainan, Mahaleel, Jared, Methuselah and Lamech. These could narrate the same things, and whatever else they knew, to Noah, Shem, Ham and Japhet. And Noah could narrate the same and whatever else he knew to Abraham, and Shem could to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: for Jacob was forty-eight years old when Shem died. Who would have imagined, without making the comparison, that Noah lived till Abram was sixty years old, and that Shem lived long enough to see Abraham buried.

TABLE II.—From the Flood to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

		Noah.	Shem.	Arphaxad.	Salah.	Eber.	Peleg.	Reu.	Serug.	Nahor.	Terah.	Abram.	Isaac.	Jacob.	ANNO MUNDI.		
															Born.	Died.	Age.
Noah	950	600	438	433	464	209	239	207	230	148	205	175	180	147	1056	2006	950
Shem	450	433	403	403	209	170	239	148	148	49	175	175	180	147	1556	2156	600
Arphaxad	350	433	403	403	209	165	207	148	148	76	175	175	180	147	1658	2096	438
Salah	315	433	403	403	209	67	100	130	130	75	175	175	180	147	1693	2126	433
Heber	285	433	403	403	209	239	207	148	148	75	175	175	180	147	1723	2187	464
Peleg	209	239	239	239	239	170	239	148	148	76	175	175	180	147	1757	1916	209
Reu	221	239	239	239	239	170	239	148	148	76	175	175	180	147	1787	2026	239
Serug	189	239	239	239	239	165	207	148	148	49	175	175	180	147	1819	2049	230
Nahor	158	148	148	148	148	165	207	148	148	76	175	175	180	147	1849	1997	148
Terah	130	205	177	205	205	67	100	130	130	75	175	175	180	147	1878	2124	205
Abraham	130	175	148	175	205	67	100	130	130	75	175	175	180	147	1948	2123	175
Isaac	60	108	58	78	139	78	101	101	1	16	15	15	120	147	2048	2228	180
Jacob	48	18	79	79	79	79	79	79	1	16	15	15	120	147	2108	2255	147

By this Table it appears, Noah was cotemporary with every generation after him, down to Abram—Shem down to Jacob. But the average length of human life in the period between Jacob and Moses, as reckoned by some learned men, was from 150 to 120 years. If the xc. Psalm was written by Moses, as some have supposed, the average length of life was reduced to 70 years from that time. (Ps. xc. 10.) At present, it is computed, that persons under the age of 28½ years are a little more than one-half of the population of any country; and persons under thirteen years compose one-fourth. A generation is now reckoned at 33½ years, *i. e.* the whole human race, at a medium, is changed in that period. Reckoning thus, there have been 55 generations since the birth of Christ, and 125 since the Flood.

Great antiquity

of the Chinese nation.

cient are grossly ignorant and idolatrous. We have reason to believe that the Chinese nation has existed above four thousand years as a monarchy. The admitted history of that nation ascends to within a very short period after the flood; and consequently the nation was formed before Heber or Abraham died; but this people have no knowledge of the true religion, and probably have had very little true knowledge of God at any time since Abraham's day.*

I have now given you some instruction upon several subjects, which I hope will give you greater interest in the history of Joseph—I shall make use of it hereafter. As we proceed, other interesting subjects will arise in Geography, Chronology, and the manners and customs of those times, which I will stop to explain to you.

* Confucius, the famous Chinese philosopher, born at Chanping, about 2400 years ago, wrote an account of the original religion of his countrymen, which he says he derived from the most ancient writers—principally from the kings Yao and Xun, who lived, according to his account, 1500 years before his time, or about 3900 years ago, which would be about three hundred years after the deluge, and about fifty years before the birth of Abraham. This philosopher speaks of a cause or principle of the existence of all things, eternal, infinite, indestructible, without limits, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is called "Tien" or "Changti" in their language. But these attributes belong only to the true God. What this author says, makes it probable that the religion of China, down nearly to the time of Abraham, was a pure theism.

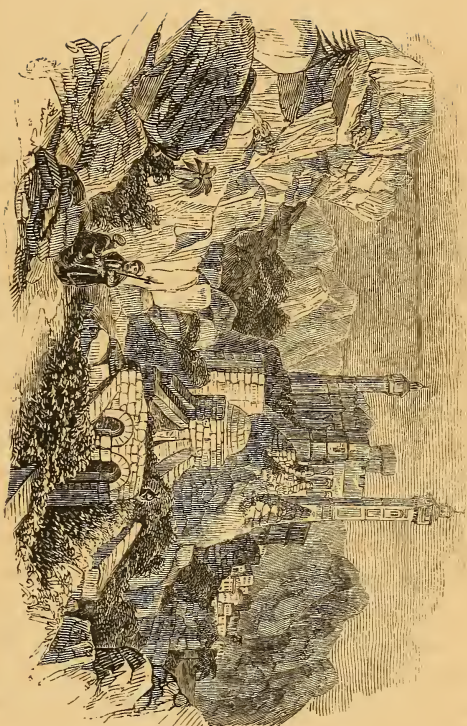
CHAPTER II.

The History

begins

JOSEPH's father had pitched his tent not far from Hebron and had been living at that place a considerable time, when the history begins. He was then, you remember, an old man—one hundred and nine years old. If you look on the map you will find that place about twenty-seven miles south of Jerusalem. It was called Kirjath-Arba before it was called Hebron, (Gen. xxiii. 2.) Arba was the father of Anak, and he is mentioned in Josh. xv. 13. But Arba may mean *four*, and these two words therefore may mean the city of Arba, or the city of four. The Jews have a tradition that Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried there, and hence they suppose it was called the city of four; but there is no reason to believe that Adam was buried there, and I suppose that Kirjath-Arba means the city of Arba. The oak of Mamre, spoken of in Genesis xiii. 18, was near this place, and here is the valley of Hebron. (Gen. xxxvii. 14.) Hebron* is a very ancient city—it was built

*Some have supposed that Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, lived at this place. (Luke i. 39, 40.) The Hittites lived near Hebron, and the Ammonites east and south-east of



HERRON, p. 34



Sepulcher of Abraham,

Isaac and Jacob.

before Zoan in Egypt. (Numb. xiii. 22.) It is mentioned in Scripture earlier than Damascus, another very ancient city, (Numb. xiii. 22; Gen. xiii. 18—15—2,) which some have supposed was built by Uz, the eldest son of Aram. (Gen. x. 23.) Several memorable events afterward occurred at this place. King David lived and reigned seven years at Hebron, (2 Sam. ii. 1, 4, 11; v. 1, 3; 1 Kings ii. 11,) and it was at the pool of Hebron he hanged the murderers of his rival, Ishbosheth. Probably King David composed several of his psalms at this place. At Hebron, Absalom raised the standard of rebellion against his father. The word Hebron signifies *union* or joining together, and an ancient author says it was so called, because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all buried—that is, *united* in burial—at that place, in the cave of Machpelah. The name does not occur in the New Testament, but the city, which still exists, is now called by the Mohammedans el-Khulil, which means *The Friend*, because Abraham was called the friend of God. At present the population is about ten thousand.

I wish you to look on the map and fix the place

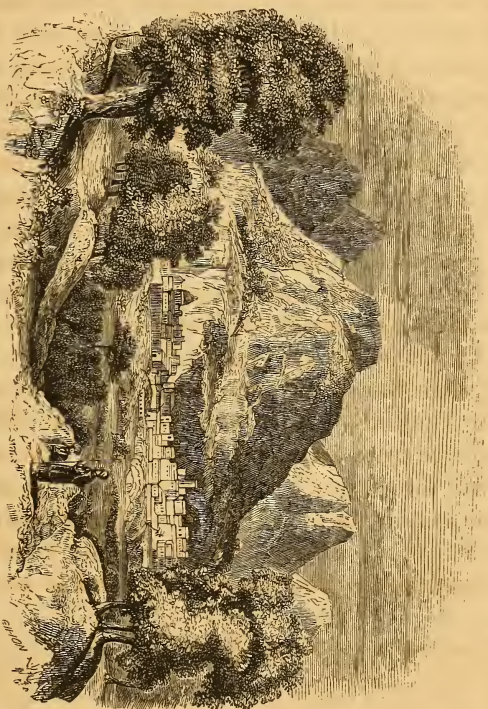
Hebron. Zoan was also called Tanis, and was situated near the mouth of the second branch of the Nile. It was one of the royal cities of Egypt. (Ps. lxxviii. 12.) It is supposed by some to have been the metropolis of Egypt, and to have continued to be the chief city in Isaiah's time. (Is. xix. 11.)

Joseph and Benjamin

remain with their father.

well in your minds, and remember that we are now going to speak about what happened at this place 3576 years ago. Jacob lived near this place at that time, and his flocks and herds were feeding at some considerable distance north of him, and Joseph's older brethren were watching and taking care of them. Joseph was old enough at that time to assist them, but Benjamin was too young. The mother of Joseph and Benjamin was dead, and they remained with their aged father. Jacob supposed his oldest sons were at a place called Sychem or Sheckem or Shalem, which was a little further from the place afterward called Jerusalem,* on the north, than Hebron was from the same place on the south. You will see it put down on the map. This is the same place that is called Sychar, in John iv. 5. It is there called a city of Samaria, and is described as near the parcel of land which Jacob gave his son Joseph. At this place, Jacob had a well, as I mentioned to you sometime ago. The same

* Jerusalem was anciently called Jebus. (1 Chron. xi. 4.) It was a city of the Jebusites. Its origin is lost in remote antiquity. When Joshua invaded Canaan, this city was the seat of Adonibezek, a Canaanitish king (Judges xix. 10, 11,) who was conquered by Joshua. (Josh. x. 23, 26.) This city was given to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 28,) but as they delayed to take possession, the tribe of Judah went up and took it, (Judges i. 8; Josh. xv. 63; Judges i. 21,) except the castle or stronghold, which was taken by Joab in the reign of David. (2 Sam. v. 2, 8.) After this it was called the city of David. (2 Sam. v. 9; vi. 10, 12; 1 Kings viii. 1. See also 2 Sam. v. 9; 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.) The name *Salem* signifies *Peace*. (Ps. lxxvi. 2.)



SHECHEM, p. 36.

Residence of

Jeroboam.

parcel of land is mentioned in Genesis xxxiii. 18, 19, and xlviii. 21, 22.

Now look upon the map and find Hebron—then find Sychem, which is also called Sychar, Sheckem or Shalem. Notice their situation in respect to each other and to Jerusalem. Before we proceed with the history, I will tell you something more about this place. The Romans called it, after they subdued the country, *Neapolis*, which means new city. Mount Gerizim was near the place, and on it the Samaritans afterward built a temple, to which the woman of Samaria referred in her conversation with our Lord, (John iv. 20.) It is a very ancient place, notwithstanding the Romans called it *Neapolis* (new city.) Abraham once pitched his tent near that place, and the Lord appeared to him there and promised to give him the land of Canaan. Near it was the plain of Moreh, (Gen. xii. 6) which you see laid down on this map. It was situated between two mountains, Ebal on the north, and Gerizim on the south. Joshua met the people for the last time at this place, (Josh. xxiv. 1.) Abimelech got possession of this place, which gave occasion to the parable of Jotham, (Judges ix. 1.) At this place also, the ten tribes rebelled against Rehoboam, Solomon's son; and it became the residence of Jeroboam. (1 Kings xii. 1, 12, 16, 25.) The place is now called Nabulus, which is proba-

Joseph sent to seeafter his Brethren.

bly the same name as Neapolis, differently written. Whenever you read the Bible you should attend to the geography of the places mentioned, and try to connect with them in your minds, the principal events for which each is distinguished. This will make the study of the Bible more interesting and more profitable. It is for this reason I dwell so long on matters of geography and history. I expect you to turn to all the places I refer to, and to read them, as well as to study the map diligently. In a short time, you will be able to do this with great readiness, and you will find it a very pleasant employment. Now we will resume the history.

Jacob supposed that his sons and his flocks were at Shekem, and he said to Joseph—"Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shekem? come, and I will send thee unto them." And he said to him—"Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren and well with the flocks, and bring me word again." So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron and he came to Shekem. (Gen. xxxvii. 13, 14.)

You would think this rather a long distance to walk, but will you trace the route along which he had to go? William Ward may do it.

William. His route was northward, or rather a little east of north. I should think he might pass



VALLEY OF SHECHEM, WITH MOUNTS ERAT AND GERIZIM, p. 38.

Jacob's tender

love for Joseph.

through Jerusalem, without going out of his way, and perhaps through Bethel or Luz. Bethlehem Ephrata is situated a little distance toward the left, and Ai or Hai a little toward the right. The distance I should estimate on the map to be about sixty or seventy miles in a direct line.

You have described it accurately enough for our purposes, and you see now more distinctly, I presume, than you ever did before, the way that Joseph went in obedience to his father. I will now tell you something more about those older sons of Jacob, whom Joseph went to see. They were rude and uncultivated, and at that time by no means the best of men. They were very different from Joseph. He was a noble and pious youth, and for this reason, as well as because he was the son of his old age, Jacob loved him very tenderly, and much more than he loved his older children. Almost all fathers and mothers love all their children. They cannot help loving their children, even if they are very bad; it would be unnatural, if they did not love them; but then it is very natural that they should love those of their children who are virtuous and dutiful, more than those who are wicked and disobedient. I now speak of good fathers and mothers. Some of Jacob's sons had treated him very badly, and had been guilty of very cruel conduct toward other persons; it is not there-

Joseph displeases

his Brethren.

fore surprising that Jacob, who was a pious man, should have loved Joseph more than those who behaved so wickedly.

But Joseph had done some things which displeased his older brothers very much. He informed his father of the bad conduct of some of them; perhaps he thought his father ought to know every thing which they did, but he did not consider that carrying evil reports to his father would make them very angry with him. He was right, however, in thinking that his father ought to know every thing. Now I would not say that one brother ought never to give information of another brother's conduct to his father; but he should never do it for the love of tale-bearing, or from the desire of getting his brother into trouble. Nor ought you to tell tales of each other for the love of doing so, because tale-bearing is a mischievous thing. When you are questioned by your teachers or parents about any of your companions, then you ought to tell the truth, because your duty to your superiors requires you not only to answer, but to give a true answer. But this is a very different thing from tale-bearing. Tale-bearers always lose the confidence of their companions and seldom gain the confidence of others. I would not have you think, however, that Joseph was a tale-bearer. The Bible does not give us any reason to believe that

Joseph's coat

of many colors.

he did wrong in telling his father of the bad conduct of his older brothers: and it is very possible that he did not make any evil report of them, without being first questioned by his father. We have just seen, that when Jacob sent Joseph from Hebron to Shechem, he expected him to bring him back word again, and if Joseph had returned, it is very probable his father would have asked him a great many questions about them.

But there was another thing which excited the bad feelings of Joseph's brethren against him. Jacob loved Joseph more than he did his other sons, and he showed his love by making him a coat of many colors. He did not give such coats to his other children, and they were envious of Joseph when they saw this mark of their father's partiality to him.

Perhaps you would like to know what sort of coat this was, and how it was made. Some learned men suppose it was a coat or tunic embroidered with various colors and figures—others suppose it consisted of many patches or pieces of different colors, which were woven or sewed together. I do not know that we have reason to believe the art of embroidery,* or that of weaving cloth with

* The invention of embroidery is usually ascribed to the Phrygians—whence the Latins called embroiderers *Phrygiones*. But we learn from Homer and other ancient authors, that the Sidonians

A party-colored,

patch-work coat.

variegated colors,* was known so early as Joseph's day, and I think it more probable that the coat was made of pieces of cloth of different colors. But I think it must have been costly, and consequently an object of distinction and desire, because in those early times they had but few dyeing materials, and but little chemical skill to use them. Some persons, on the other hand, think it was a long coat, reaching to the ends of the hands, and to the feet; but I think it was a variously colored† patch-work coat, such as I have described.

Even at the present day it is customary in some parts of India to clothe a beautiful or favorite child

particularly excelled in this art. Very early mention of it is made in the Bible, (Exod. xxxv. 35; xxxviii. 23.)

* Weaving is the art of making threads into cloth. It is a very ancient art, as appears from this place and other parts of the Bible, (Job vii. 6; Gen. xxiv. 65; xiv. 23.) The fabulous story of Penelope's web proves the same thing. But this, like many other useful arts, has undergone a great variety of improvements, both as to the materials of which cloth is made, the instruments used in making it, and the modes of operation by the artist. The arts of spinning and weaving silk were not brought into England until about the year A. D. 1480, or about three hundred and sixty years ago. The first clothing ever worn by man was made by entwining or fastening leaves together. (Gen. iii. 7.) The next, was made of skins, (Gen. iii. 21.) We do not know how soon after that cloth was invented.

† The art of dyeing is very ancient. In Gen. xxxviii. 28, the color of scarlet is mentioned. The Chinese pretend that they owe this art to Hoang-ti, one of their first sovereigns. Spinning also is mentioned very early in the Bible, (Exod. xxxv. 25; see Prov. xxxi. 19; Matt. vi. 28; Luke xii. 27.) But what we call *worsted*, that is, woollen yarn or wool spun, may be reckoned a modern invention in England, and it obtained its name *worsted* from a town in Norfolk, called *Worsted*, where the art of spinning wool, it is said, was invented. Others say the art was invented in Flanders, and a similar word is found in Norman French of the same application.

Cause of the hostility ofJoseph's brethren.

with a coat of many colors, the pieces of which are often tastefully sewed together; and many of the customs which now prevail in the East, are very ancient. Perhaps this is one of them.*

However this may be, the brethren were not pleased with this distinction, which their father showed to Joseph. But their envy and anger were very much to be blamed; it was not Joseph's fault that his father loved him, and certainly, any father has the right to give to one son, something, the like of which he does not give to another. Beside, several of them were much older than Joseph, and on that account they ought not to have indulged such bad feelings toward him. It was very weak as well as wicked for them to envy Joseph for his coat. Yet so it was, while he was friendly and open-hearted toward them.

But they hated him for another reason, which I will now tell you. One day he said to them with great simplicity—"I have dreamed a dream. Hear now, I pray you, the dream that I have dreamed."

This is a peculiar expression. We should say, *I had a dream*. But the Hebrews had many forms of speech which were peculiar to themselves, and

* It is said that Hindostan was peopled by a colony from Egypt, and hence the resemblance of many Indian customs to those of ancient Egypt.

Joseph dreams ofhis superiority.

these we call Hebraisms. This is not to be wondered at, because every people have some forms of speech which are peculiar to themselves, and such forms we call *idioms*. Such peculiar expressions of the English language we call Anglicisms. Such expressions in the French language we call Gallicisms, and in the German language we call them Germanisms—in Greek Hellenisms.

Joseph in fact had two dreams, which indicated very plainly his future superiority over his brethren, though he was younger than they, and it was not very prudent in him to tell them to his brethren. I have no doubt you remember them. He told them he dreamed they were in the field binding sheaves of corn, and that his sheaf stood upright and their sheaves stood around his and bowed, as if they would make obeisance to his sheaf. It is plain they understood the meaning of his dream, for they said to him—"Shalt thou indeed reign over us, or shalt thou have dominion over us?" And they hated him more for his dreams.

A short time after, he had another dream, which signified even more than the dream just mentioned, and he told that to his father and his brethren also. He told them that he dreamed the sun and moon and eleven stars made obeisance to him. Do you know, William, what obeisance means?

Permanent possessions.Agriculture.

William. Obeisance means a bow or courtesy, as a mark of reverence or respect.

Right, and so Joseph's father understood it; for he rebuked him saying—"What is this dream, that thou hast dreamed—shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

Now there are two or three things I should like you to notice before we proceed farther. The first concerns agriculture. Some time ago, I told you that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob led a pastoral life, and that they moved about from place to place to find pasturage for their cattle. But it is evident from this passage, as well as others, that they raised grain; and to do this, it was necessary to remain stationary, at one place, or near the same place long enough for a crop to be planted and mature; and I think it probable, if not quite certain, that the field which Jacob had at Sychem or Sychar—now called Nabulus—was a permanent possession. (Gen. xlviii. 21, 22; xxxiii. 19.)

Another thing I wish you to remark is, that Joseph's own mother was already dead, and Jacob had buried her in the way to Ephrath which is Bethlehem, and set a pillar on her grave.* (Gen.

* Burial was esteemed of a sacred nature among the ancients, and the only case of burning a dead body mentioned in the Scriptures is that of Saul and his sons, (1 Sam. xxxi. 12;) but with the heathen this custom, though not universal, was common, as ap-

Uncertainty of Joseph's

singular dreams.

xxxv. 16, 20.) This shows how ancient, is the custom, of marking the place of a grave by a pillar or stone. This place is mentioned in (Matt. ii. 18.) But Leah, Jacob's other wife, was alive perhaps at that time, and if Jacob did not refer to her when he rebuked Joseph, perhaps he meant to intimate that he did not know how such a dream could come to pass. But I do not suppose that Jacob intended to find fault with Joseph for dreaming—Joseph could not help that. Nor do I suppose Jacob intended to accuse him of inventing the dream. Nor do I think he regarded it as an idle fancy; for the Bible informs us, he observed the saying, that is, the dream. Yet it is plain, as we shall see from what happened afterward, that Jacob did not know how to explain it; in fact, that he did not understand what was to be the train of events, by which Divine Providence would fulfil the dream. But it was a very singular dream, and Jacob might well think of it, because he could not know what would happen afterward. Still it was very wrong in the brethren of Joseph to hate him for having these

appears by Homer. Deprivation of burial was a punishment of tyranny, (Is. xiv. 18, 19,) and Homer (Iliad xv. 455,) calls sepulchres and tombs *the recompense of the dead*. Thucydides (Book 4) says that the Greeks, in the Persian war, bound themselves by oath not to desert their general nor leave their dead unburied. Tarquin was called *proud*, we are told, because he deprived his father-in-law of burial, saying that Romulus was not buried. The law of the XII Tables among the Romans ordered the simplicity of tombs.

God instructed menformerly by dreams.

dreams. Yet they were more envious of him than ever before.

You may wish to inquire whether any dependence can be put upon dreams. Some people are very superstitious, and put great confidence in them ; sometimes they are very much frightened by a bad dream and very much encouraged by a good dream ; while other persons consider all dreams idle and frivolous. I will say something to you upon this matter.

I do not think that any man who believes the Bible, can doubt that in ancient times, God sometimes instructed men by dreams, and if we think how great God is and what wisdom and power he has, and what control he can exercise over every created thing, we can see no reason why he should not instruct men by dreams as well as in any other way. It is a very wonderful thing that we should dream at all, but every one does so sometimes, and in dreams we seem to see persons and places, and things, and to be engaged with them, or to be employed about them, just as when we are awake. Now God formed our souls as well as our bodies, and gave us all the powers we possess. Is it wonderful then that he should be able to control the minds of men, and even make them dream of things, which he means to bring to pass, if he pleases to do so ?

The Bible informs us of several ways in which God made things known to good men in ancient

Mode in which God communicated
to good men.

times.* Sometimes he did it by sending an angel, sometimes by a vision, sometimes by a voice, sometimes by inspiration or conveying ideas into their minds, and sometimes by dreams. Job said (xxxiii. 14, 17) "God speaketh once, yea, twice; yet man perceiveth it not;—in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumbering upon the bed—then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose," &c. You will find a great many other dreams mentioned in Scripture, besides the two dreams of Joseph. I will mention several of them, which you may read in your Bibles. The dream of Abimelech, the king of Gerar, (Gen. xx. 3,) the dream of Jacob, (Gen. xxxi. 11,) the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker, (Gen. xl. 5, 13,) the dreams of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, (Gen. xli. 1, 32,)

* The ancient seers (afterward called prophets, as appears by 1 Sam. ix. 9. were instructed in different ways; but Moses was not a prophet of the ordinary kind, as we are taught in Num. xii. 5—8. Bishop Horsley supposed that there were true prophets among idolatrous nations during the patriarchal age, and he specifies two of this order, viz. Job and Balaam; both of whose prophecies are contained in the Bible. Balaam, he supposed, lived within a century after Job, and that with him the sun of prophecy set in the horizon of the Gentile world. It was by means of such prophecies (as this learned man supposed) preserved in different countries of the East, though corrupted by subsequent additions, that the general expectation of the advent of the Messiah prevailed about the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, which occasioned the visit of wise men from the East to Jerusalem. (See Matt. ii. 1.) It may be added that Jonah of Gath-Epher in the tribe of Zebulun (Matth. iv. 15. John vii. 52,) was sent by the Divine command to Nineveh, a gentile city, about 771 years before Christ, which proves that the functions of true prophets were not always confined to the land of Israel. (Matt. xii. 41.)

 God communicated knowledge

 through dreams.

the dream of Solomon. (2 Chron i. 7, and 1 Kings iii. 5, 15.) The history of Gideon contains another example. (Judges vii. 10, 14.) The dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, (Dan. ii. iv.) The Evangelist Matthew mentions the dreams of Joseph the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, (Matt. i. 20, 24—ii. 19, 21,) and the dreams of the wise men who came from the East, about the time of our Saviour's birth, (Matt. ii. 12,) and the dream of Pilate's wife, (Matt. xxvii. 19.) But I believe we have no instance of any Divine communication by dream in any of the gospels except that of Matthew. But the Apostle Peter quotes the prophet Joel (ii. 28,) in Acts ii. 16, 21, in whose prophecy divine dreams are spoken of. Paul's vision at Troas is perhaps another instance of the same kind. (Acts xvi. 9.) These examples are enough to prove to you, that in the times of the Old Testament, and during the age of the apostles, this was one of the ways in which God communicated some knowledge of important events to men, before they came to pass, so that you cannot doubt, that Joseph was made to dream as he did, in order to show obscurely beforehand, what was to happen. But while we believe this, we should not be so superstitious as to believe that every dream is a divine admonition; for this is not so. Very often people dream at night because they are sick, or

All dreams arenot inspired

not quite well, or a dream may come through much business, (Eccles. v. 3,) and such dreams have no meaning at all. Of course, we cannot certainly know, whether God does not communicate knowledge to men, even now, in this way. We cannot know what God does not do: "His ways are wonderful and past finding out;" but we may be sure that what he does is wise and proper. Yet if he does so, we must believe that it is only for the benefit or instruction of the individual who is thus taught, and not for the instruction of other people. What we find in the Bible we should believe, but the Bible cannot be made use of to prove the truth of such dreams as people now have; and those who pretend that they have had such dreams and try to frighten others by them, are not to be depended on. Such persons are generally ignorant, or superstitious, or false, or fanatical, or greatly deceived themselves. Do not suppose, then, that you ought to believe in dreams, because there is good reason to believe that Joseph's dreams were divinely inspired. If one of you were to dream that you would be a king or the president of the United States, or become as rich as Mr. Girard was, I don't think it would be any more likely to happen, because you dreamed it. You would be very foolish to place any dependence on such a dream. We will now proceed with the history.

Joseph,

an obedient son.

When Joseph had these dreams, he and his older brothers were at Hebron with their father and Benjamin; but in a little time, it was necessary to take the flocks to another place for pasture. They went from Hebron to Shechem, which was something more than a day's journey for a man. These places we have described. Joseph and Benjamin remained with their aged father. Do you remember how old Jacob was?

All. One hundred and nine years old.

Right: Some time after they had gone, Jacob called Joseph (as I have already told you) to send him on a visit to them; and Joseph, like an obedient son, was ready to go, notwithstanding he must have known their unkind feelings toward him; for the Bible informs us, they could not speak peaceably to him, (Gen. xxxvii. 4,) which must have convinced him, that they did not love him. But he had no unkind feelings toward them. He wished them well, and no doubt really wished to see them. So Joseph took leave of his father and Benjamin and set out on his journey to Shechem. If we consider the way in which people moved about in those days, we may easily believe that Joseph was known in all that part of the country, and it was customary, no doubt, to give persons who were away from home, a friendly reception. So that Joseph could find shelter from the storms

Joseph disappointed in

not finding his Brethren.

or rest or sleep at night in any house or tent, where he happened to be when night came.* When he reached Shechem, he could not find his brethren, or their tents, but at length he met a man, who had heard his brethren say, they were going to Dothan. We will stop now and look at this place on the map. Benjamin, you may point it out.

Benjamin. Here it is, on the north of Shechem, not a very great distance, and about half-way between Jordan and the Mediterranean sea.

No, it is not very far from Shechem, but still a pretty long walk for one who had already traveled from Hebron. Now I will tell you something about this place. It was situated on the road that was traveled by the Ishmaelites from Gilead and Syria to Egypt. The name Gilead, often denotes the whole region on the other side of Jordan. Dothan is supposed to be the same place that is now called Khan Yub Yusuf or the Khan of Joseph's

*In Palestine and the East the nights are cool, even at the hottest seasons of the year, so that fire is sometimes found necessary at night in the middle of May. This may explain Jacob's complaint to Laban. (Gen. xxxi. 40.) The evening before our Lord's crucifixion was cold enough for fire. (John xviii. 18.) The cold or winter lasts from the middle of October till the end of April, and the heat of summer begins in the end of April and lasts till the middle of October: But the cold is felt principally during the nights. (See Jer. xxxvi. 22.) Rain seldom falls in Palestine during the summer months, but only in spring and autumn, and therefore called in Scripture, "the early and the latter rain." (Deut. xi. 14; Hos. vi. 3; Joel ii. 23.)

Envy and jealousy

toward Joseph.

pit. It is south of the plain of Esdraelon and at the foot of the mountains of Bethulia.

To this place Joseph went, weary as he must have been, from Shechem. When he came near the place where his brethren were, they were standing near a deep pit. They saw him before he came very near and conspired together to kill him. They said to each other, there comes the dreamer (or the master of dreams)—come let us kill him, and cast him into some pit and then we shall see what will become of his dreams. But then they thought their father would inquire what had become of him, and they must give him some answer. And what answer do you think they thought of? You may be sure they would never think of telling him the truth. In fact they invented a falsehood, for they agreed to say, that some wild beast had devoured him.

You see now what wicked conduct may come from envy and jealousy. It appears that Joseph wore the beautiful coat his father had given him, but if he had not, they would have remembered it, no doubt, though they spoke only of his dreams—but they did not talk like reasonable men about his dreams; for if they supposed that God had given him these dreams, to signify his future superiority over them, it was very foolish and very wicked to think that they could prevent their coming to pass:

Cruelty and wickedness

of Joseph's Brethren.

But if they thought they were idle fancies of his childish brain, it was not necessary for them to do such a wicked act, to prevent their coming to pass. The envy and hatred of some of them were so great to their young brother, that they resolved to kill him, and then tell their father a lie to conceal the dreadful crime. I advise you, never try to make other boys envious of you, and never allow yourselves to hate or envy others. Bad feelings of every kind, are very dangerous to cherish, and if any of you have bad feelings toward any one of your companions, you should try to get rid of them as soon as possible.

I have told you that Joseph's older brethren were wicked and cruel men, and I think you must be convinced of that, by the wicked purpose they formed of putting him to death and concealing the crime by a lie; but they were not all of them equally wicked: Simeon and Levi were the worst, and you will think so, if you read what Jacob said of them just before he died. (Gen. lxi. 5, 7.) Reuben, who was the oldest of Jacob's sons, was a man of much milder temper, but still, he had done some very bad things. He was present when Joseph came to Dothan and heard the others speak of their wicked plan. He pitied Joseph, and proposed the best thing he could to save his life, and he had some regard for his father. He said "Shed

Reuben's desire

to save Joseph.

no blood, let us not kill him, lay no hand upon him, but cast him into this pit in the wilderness."

You may think perhaps, that this was not much better, than to kill him outright, because he would either be drowned in the pit or die from hunger, because he could not get out of the pit without help. But Reuben had another plan, which he concealed from his brethren. He intended to watch for an opportunity when they were in their tents or engaged about the cattle, or in the night, quietly to help his poor brother out of the pit and send him back to his father, and he proposed the plan of putting him into the pit, because he knew his wicked brothers would not listen to him, if he should suggest it to them to do, what he really intended. He knew they were resolved to put Joseph to death, and probably supposed they would think it a better plan to let him die of hunger and want.

Joseph had not yet come up to them, when they agreed upon this plan. The Bible does not inform us what he said to them, but if we consider his friendly and pious disposition, he was doubtless very glad he had found them well; and was ready to embrace them, and tell them about their aged father. But they took him and stripped off his beautiful coat (Gen. xxxvii. 23) and would not hear him, notwithstanding he besought them and cried

Joseph is let down into the pitby his Brethren

bitterly, (Gen. xlii. 21) and then they let him down into the deep pit they had agreed upon. It so happened that there was no water, or not much in the pit at that time; for if there had been, he must have been drowned. There his cruel brothers left him and sat down to eat their food, as unconcerned as if they had done nothing wrong. But Reuben could not remain with them—he could not endure such savage behavior. His ardent wish now was, to deliver his brother from the pit in which he had been buried alive, and restore him to his father.

CHAPTER III.

Ishmaelitish merchants from the

Mountains of Gilead.

WHILE the other brothers were eating their meal, they saw a large company of merchants at a distance: They were Ishmaelites, and lived in Arabia. This country, you know, is situated on the east and south-east of Canaan. Can you point it out on the map, Robert?

Robert. Here it is, it must be a large country.

“Yes: It is quite large, but we must look for some other places on the map. These merchants were coming from the mountains of Gilead. I spoke of Gilead, a little while ago. Now look at Dothan and pass your eye north-east to Damascus.* A little south of Damascus, you will see some

* Damascus (called by the natives Damasek and Damakir, which last name signifies the city of Dama, or Adama,) is one of the most interesting cities in the world. It is one of the oldest. It was contemporary with ancient Thebes and Babylon, which are now in ruins, while Damascus remains, and is now one of the largest cities in the Turkish empire—the largest except Constantinople. It contains probably 200,000 inhabitants. It is beautifully situated in an extensive and pleasant plain. This valley is probably referred to in Amos i. 5, by the name of Beth-Eden—the house of pleasure, delight. Its chief rivers were Abana and Pharpar. (2 Kings v. 12.) It is often referred to in the Scriptures, (Gen. xv. 2; 2 Sam. viii. 6; Cant. vii. 4; Is. vii. 8—viii. 4; Ezek. xxvii. 18; Acts ix. 2; 2 Cor. xi. 32; Gal. i. 17, and many other places.) Damasks, a sort of silk stuff, having some parts raised above the ground representing flowers and other figures, obtained their name from their having been invented at this place. It is noted also for its steel, its roses, and its Damascene plums or damsons.

Mount Nebo.

The land of Gilead,

mountains marked on the map. They are a part of the mountains extending from Mount Lebanon* southward on the east of the land of Canaan. Gilead is the name of an extended tract of country, and you may get an idea of its extent from Deut. xxxiv. 1, where it is said the Lord showed Moses from the mountain of Nebo all the land of Gilead† unto Dan. Now look on the map again; you will find Mount Nebo a little distance toward the east of the northern shore of the Dead Sea. It is a little north of east. Dan is in the northern part of Canaan, south-west from Damascus, and not far from that city. Well: it was from this region of country toward the north, these Ishmaelites were coming, and they were going to Egypt, which is situated south-west of the land of Canaan. Now look on the map again for Egypt. Point it out on the map, Samuel?

* The Arabian poets speaking of Mount Lebanon, say that it "bears winter on his head, spring on his shoulders, autumn in his bosom, while summer lies sleeping at his feet." The highest point of Lebanon is called Sannin, which is reckoned to be 10,000 feet above the level of the sea. Lebanon was so celebrated among the ancient Israelites from their first settlement in Canaan, that allusions to it abound in the writings of the prophets. (See Isa. xxxv. 2—xl. 16—lx. 13; Jer. xviii. 14—xxii. 6; Hos. xiv. 5.)

† The most recent, and perhaps also, the most ancient application of the name Gilead (Djelaad), is to a mountain on the table-land south of the river Jabbok, which falls into the Jordan many miles below the Jarmuk. But in Hebrew geography, the name is applied to a country which extended much farther north, perhaps as far as the Jarmuk. In Josh. xiii. 25, 31, we find that all the cities of Gilead are given to Gad, and "half Gilead" to Manasseh.

Boundaries of Egypt.

Direction of the journey.

Samuel. Here it is: It is in the north-eastern part of Africa; and is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea on the north, and the Red Sea and Isthmus of Suez on the east; by Ethiopia on the south, and by Libya on the west.

Very well: But we will not stop now to say much about Egypt—all I wish you to observe is the route these Ishmaelitish merchants were traveling. They had come from some place east of Palestine, passing a little south of Damascus, and had arrived at Dothan, just after Joseph's brethren had put him into the pit. From that place they were going southward toward Shechem and Jerusalem and Gerar, which you will find near the bottom of the map, and not far from the sea, and thence onward to Egypt. Hebron, the place which Joseph had come from, would be a little out of their way. Now you see their route.

These merchants had with them various articles of merchandize, such as spices, balm and myrrh, which they were conveying on the backs of camels to Egypt to sell.* As they were coming up,

*The Egyptians, in these early times, had great need of the productions of Arabia and India such as these, and the use they made of them, either in embalming the bodies of their dead, or in the worship of their almost numberless idol gods, was very considerable. They were chiefly served in this respect, by the people who lived on the north of the Arabian Gulf, with whom in after times the Hebrews had commercial intercourse. (See Numb. xxxi. 22, 50; Judges viii. 21, 24, 25, 26.) The manufactures and trade of Egypt are referred to, several times in the Bible. (See

Joseph's Brethren agreeto sell him to the Ishmaelites.

Judah, one of the brethren of Joseph, proposed a thing which none of them had thought of before—"What profit," said he, "will it be to kill our brother and conceal his blood—come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh."

Judah's brethren were content to do so. Perhaps they began to relent a little. At least, if Judah had heartily agreed, at first, to the plan of killing him, or letting him down into the pit, it is evident he began to relent, and I think this circumstance shows that he was not so cruel as some of the others. Yet it was a very barbarous action to sell their brother as they would an ox or a sheep. But Judah thought perhaps that Joseph might, in some way, regain his liberty and go back to his father again.

But now I must tell you that the Arab merchants in those times often took men to Egypt, to sell them for slaves, and the unfortunate men, who were taken and sold in that way, not only lost their freedom, but sometimes were treated very badly. It would have been a very wicked thing for these brethren of Joseph, to have sold him if he had been a stranger; but to sell their own brother, when they knew how much their father

Scarcity of silver moneyin those days.

would grieve for him, was most unnatural as well as wicked.

I do not know that we can tell precisely in our money, how much they sold him for. The Bible says, they sold him for twenty pieces of silver; so that they had two pieces each. Some learned men think that each piece weighed about a half ounce, and according to that estimate, they sold him for about ten dollars; but others think they did not get so much as that. Yet you must remember that silver money was much scarcer in those days than it is now, and of course it was worth more. Perhaps we shall not be far out of the way, if we suppose, they received for him about the price of three oxen in those days. It is pretty plain, that they sold him for a very small sum, as money was not so much their object, as that he should be carried far away, so that he should never return, to expose their misbehaviour, and annoy them. Yet, even if their motive was to get money, it shows they were avaricious as well as envious and blood-thirsty men; of this we may be sure, that their motive, whatever it may have been, was unnatural and detestable.

The Ishmaelites were willing to buy him and take him with their other merchandize to Egypt, to sell. Accordingly Joseph's brethren returned to the pit and lifted him out and delivered him to

Joseph's purchaserswere probably his relatives.

those cruel men. Now, can you tell me, David, who these Ishmaelites were, and why they were so called?

David. They were so called from Ishmael.

But who was Ishmael, and what do you know of him?

David. "He was the son of Abraham and Hagar."

Yes. He was born before Isaac, the grandfather of Joseph. When Ishmael grew up to be a man, he lived in the wilderness of Paran, and Hagar, his mother, took him a wife out of the land of Egypt. (Gen. xxi. 21.) You see then that these Ishmaelites were related to Joseph, for both descended from Abraham. Perhaps they were all the great grandchildren of Abraham, yet, if they knew their relationship, they did not make much account of it.

But these merchants are also called Midianites, and the Midianites also were descendents of Abraham, (Gen. xxv. 1, 2,) and their country as well as the wilderness of Paran,* was southward of Canaan, (Judges vi. 4; vii. 12; Deut. i. 19; Num. xiii. 3, 25; Joshua vii. 14.) The company was probably a mixed caravan, who might be generally

* Paran was a part of the desert belonging to Arabia Petrea, in the neighborhood of Mount Sinai. The wife of Moses was a Midianite. In Numbers xii. 1, she is called an Ethiopian woman or rather a Cushite, that is, a native of the land of Cush or of Arabian Ethiopia. In the English Bible the name Ethiopia comprehends all the southern and eastern borders of Egypt.

Egypt the centre of commerce

at that time.

called Arabians, proceeding in the regular course of traffic to Egypt for a market. It was, no doubt, very much like the caravans which may be seen crossing the Deserts of Arabia at the present day. Egypt was at that time the centre of commerce and trade.* Now I think you have a correct idea of the company to whom Joseph was sold.

You may imagine the feelings of Joseph when he saw himself thus disposed of, by his cruel brothers; but his cries and entreaties did no good, and his anguish, which they saw, did not soften their hard hearts in the least. Away the Ishmaelites went with him, and the next time we hear of him, he is in Egypt.

*Very important communications were established, at an early period, between Upper Egypt, Ethiopia and Lybia; either through Mëroë or by the way of Ammonium; the riches of which, at a later time, were coveted by Cambyzes, the king of Persia, and prompted him to one of the most foolish of all undertakings. (Herodotus, book iii. sec. 17.) These places were the *rendezvous* of the caravans, which came from the southern shores of the Arabian gulf—from the interior of Africa, and afterward from the territory of Carthage. The products of Egypt, sent off from Thebes, were exchanged for the merchandise of India, of Arabia, Ethiopia and other parts of Africa, which were transmitted through the rest of the kingdom by means of the Nile, the navigation of which was probably very considerable, even at that time, inasmuch as, according to Herodotus (book ii. sec. 164,) there was a class of persons entirely devoted to this kind of occupation. But the Egyptians did not engage in maritime commerce so early as the Phœnicians. Their religious precepts, or the policy of their kings perhaps prevented it. Strabo says, the kings of Egypt, for a long time, were averse to trade, particularly by sea, and discouraged navigation. They were satisfied with the productions of their own fertile soil . . . which circumstance made them ill affected to sailors and shipping, and little solicitous about sea ports and harbors. especially beyond the limits of their own country.

Reuben laments

the loss of Joseph.

Scarcely had they gone, when Reuben, who had left them some time before, returned to the pit, into which they had put Joseph. You recollect what his design was; and when he found Joseph was not in the pit, he was so distressed that he rent his clothes in pieces, and then he went to his brethren and told them, the child is not in the pit, and in sorrow cried out, “and I, whither shall I go.” You may wonder why he should tear his clothes. That could not do any good, nor bring Joseph back to him: That is very true, and when boys break their playthings, it does no good for them to cry about it, and yet they are very apt to do so. But in ancient times, in the eastern countries, the way in which people expressed great sorrow, or any very strong feeling, was by rending their clothes. You may find examples of this in the New Testament, (Acts xiv. 14; xvi. 22.)

This lament of Reuben is very plaintive, and shows how much he was grieved and distressed. I wish you could understand and feel how beautiful it is, as I hope some of you will, when you are older. It is impossible to express his words fully in our language—they are so peculiar, so simple, so beautiful. Still you may think that Reuben ought to be blamed not a little, because he did not give more attention to Joseph. He ought to have done so: he was the oldest, and he knew how cruel

Joseph soldas a slave.

his brothers were, but he came back too late. The Ishmaelites had gone, and Joseph with them, to be sold as a slave in Egypt.

None of them had reason to expect that they would ever meet him again; but God, as we shall soon see, had other designs.

Now they had to consider what they should say to their father. You may be sure they would not be willing to tell him, that they had sold him as a slave, and yet if they told the truth they must say so. If they told him, they had not seen him, or that they did not know what had become of him, it would have been a falsehood, what then could they say? They contrived a very artful and wicked lie, as I will now show you. A man or a boy may tell a lie in many ways. He may tell a lie by his actions, as well as by speaking: but some persons are so foolish, as to think they do not tell a lie, unless they speak or say something in words which is not true.

The Bible does not expressly inform us, whether Reuben took any part in the deception, which they practiced on their father. But he did not tell him what had become of Joseph, and perhaps he did not actually know that they had sold him. Yet he must have known the deception, which they agreed upon, and yet he did not undeceive his father. Perhaps he was afraid to do so; and thought

His brethrenretain his coat.

that if he did, it would do no good—he knew it would make them very angry with him, and perhaps he was afraid they would take his life. However this may be, they killed a kid and dipped Joseph's coat in the blood, and then sent it, as some suppose, by a messenger to Hebron, to their father. Now, you observe that while they sold Joseph they kept his coat, and perhaps did not even show it to the Ishmaelites, although it was costly, and although they might have sold it at a high price. Perhaps they thought, that if the Ishmaelites saw the coat, they might suppose that Joseph was a person of superior rank, and that might have led them to make inquiries about his relations, with the hope of profit. And if the Ishmaelites had done so, the real crime might have been found out. Having kept the coat, they made use of it to deceive their father.

Some persons think that before they sent it, they cut it in pieces, with some sharp instrument, so as to give it the appearance of having been torn by the teeth or claws of some ferocious beast. But to make this meaning out, they explain one of the words which Moses uses in this place, to signify that action, and this they may do according to the sense of the word in the book of Job (xxxvi. 12,) and in some other places, (Job xxx. 12; Is. xxvii. 8; Gen. xxxvii. 8; 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.) I think it

Joseph's brethrendisrespectful to their father.

very probable this explanation is correct. But then if they did so, we have no word to signify that they sent the coat by a messenger, but only a word to signify that they carried it to their father themselves.

The next circumstance to be noticed is,—they dipped the coat in the blood of a kid. The Rabbins suppose they selected a kid, because its blood very nearly resembles, as they say, the blood of man. When they arrived at Hebron, they showed the coat, smeared with blood, to their father, and told him they had found it. They intended to make him believe they had found it in the field, or in the wilderness, not on Joseph's back, and they called on him to say whether it was Joseph's coat or not, as if they were not themselves quite sure: This was very hypocritical. They knew that Jacob would suspect them if they were silent, for he knew their ill-will to Joseph. And now observe how disrespectful their language was to their aged father. They did not say, see now whether this is our brother Joseph's coat, but "know now whether it be thy son's coat or no,"—meaning, no doubt, to reproach their father, even in his affliction, for having favored Joseph above them. They spoke as they would if they had not been Jacob's sons, and as if Joseph were not their brother.

Now you see, boys, how one wicked action leads

Necessity of

confessing our faults.

to another : First, they sell their brother as a slave for a paltry sum, scarcely more than enough to buy each of them a pair of shoes, as some learned persons think : Then they invented a hateful lie, to conceal their crime ; and as if that was not enough, they dishonor themselves and sin against God* by reproaching their father. It almost always happens, that one sin leads to another ; you ought therefore to beware of doing a wrong thing, but if you even should do wrong, you ought without delay to confess your fault freely ; for if you do not, you will very probably do some other thing quite as bad or worse, and then another ; and in this way, you may become habitually wicked, before you are aware of it. Boys are not apt to think of this ; and I have no doubt that many boys grow up to be bad men, and come to a bad end, just in this

* The fifth commandment, as we have it in the Bible, was given by Moses, who was not born until 157 years after this time ; yet there can be no reasonable doubt that just such a commandment had been given long before. Ham was cursed for an act of irreverence to his father, (Gen. ix. 22, 6.) Such a law, no doubt, existed before the deluge ; indeed from the birth of Cain. It is just such a law as we may reasonably suppose the all-wise and all-merciful Ruler of the universe would give. (See Deut. v. 16—xxvii. 16.) It lies at the foundation of the Patriarchal form of government, which was not only the earliest form, but of long continuance. Many learned men think that the Chinese monarchy is founded essentially upon this primitive form, although by lapse of time and other causes, it has become greatly corrupted. The institutions of the Sabbath, and of sacrifices also, existed long before the time of Moses ; also the law of primogeniture. Other instances of ancient laws, re-enacted in the Mosaic code, may be found in the Bible.

Jacob's love for his older sonsgreater than theirs for him.

way. There is one bad thing, which boys are very apt to do, that is, to tell lies in order to conceal some wrong thing they have done. You ought, therefore, to be on your guard, against ever saying that which is not strictly true. When a boy gets a character for telling lies, nobody who knows him will readily believe him even when he becomes a man; for people will remember his character as a boy, and will be very apt to think that a lying boy will not grow up to be a truthful man, and therefore they will be very slow to trust him. There is, however, another reason stronger than this. You must remember that although you cannot see God, yet God sees you, and knows every lie that is told, and every wicked thing that is done, and will certainly punish those who do such things, whether they are men or boys. It is true God does not always punish men or boys as soon as they do wicked things. He did not in the case of Joseph's brethren.

Now let us turn to Jacob. You remember that he sent Joseph only to see how his brethren were, and then come back and tell him. You see that Jacob was anxious about his older sons, and wished to know how they were. He loved them more than they loved him. It very often happens that parents love their children, more than children love their parents; but every good child will try to love

Jacob's sorrow atthe loss of Joseph.

his parents, as much as they love him. It would not take Joseph very long to go and return, and perhaps Jacob expected he would come back in four or five days or a week at the furthest. But Joseph did not come, and it was perhaps some time—several weeks—before the brethren of Joseph returned with the flocks. They would not take the trouble of driving their large flocks so far to pasture them only for a few days. Nor would Jacob have sent Joseph to inquire about them if he expected them back very soon. You can imagine then how anxious Jacob was for his beloved Joseph, when days and weeks passed and Joseph did not return, as he expected. But at length the bloody coat was brought to him, by his older sons. He knew it as soon as he saw it and cried out—“This is my son's coat, an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces.” Now this is just what his wicked sons, wished him to believe. Though he knew they were bad, he could not think they were bad enough to kill their brother, or practice such a cruel deception upon him.

We know by this exclamation of Jacob, that there were ferocious wild beasts in that country at that time. We find several sorts of wild beasts mentioned in the Scriptures—such as lions, wolves, leopards and bears. When we read the Bible, or indeed any other book, we should try to get all the

Description

of the Lion

useful information we can out of it. Many boys and even grown persons are in the habit of hurrying through a book, as fast as they can, particularly if it relates to some interesting subject, and they are not much wiser when they have read it through in this way, than when they began. I do not wish you to follow their example, and therefore I shall stop in the narrative to call your attention to such particulars as suggest something worthy to be known and remembered.

Have you ever seen a lion?

All. Yes sir—No sir.

I thought that some of you had, and some had not; but you have all seen a picture of a lion and of the other wild animals I mentioned.

Those of you, who have never seen a lion, must imagine an enormous cat, more than three feet high at the shoulders—sometimes eight feet long from the nose to the tail—with a large head, broad face, majestic, commanding look, wrinkled forehead, deeply set eyes, cleft or divided upper lip, hanging down on both sides like a mastiff's, and having about the breast, neck and throat a thick, shaggy mane, and a large tuft of hair at the end of the tail. The lion's strength is prodigious. The mane is peculiar to the male lion, and makes its appearance when he is in his third year. The lion and the leopard, as well as the tiger, belong to the cat-

The Leopard.

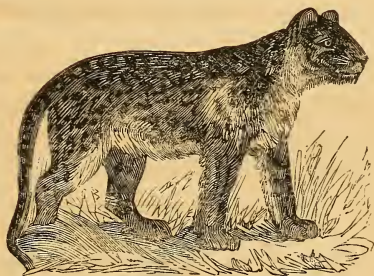
The Wolf.

tribe,* and their whole formation, as well as their teeth, shows that their habits are blood-thirsty and ferocious. The leopard† is one of the most beautiful animals of the cat-tribe; the black rosettes, with which its yellow hide is marked, give it an appearance which has always been very much admired. It lies in wait for its prey and is remarkably swift. The wolf resembles a dog, and is not so strong as a bear, nor so swift as a leopard, and is frequently a prey to stronger wild beasts;‡ it

* All animals of the cat tribe have round heads, short jaws, a rough bristly tongue, and sharp retractile claws, that is—the nails are lodged in a sheath from which they can be protracted at pleasure. This tribe of animals is so denominated, from the characteristics they have in common with the domestic cat. The lion shuns the light of the sun, seeking his prey chiefly during the night: hence his lair or covert is called his DEN.

† This name is derived from *Leo* lion, *pardus* panther, the *lion-pard* or *lion-panther*. This animal differs but little from the real pard or panther, except in being of a smaller size; only about four feet long. Both these animals abound in the interior of Africa, and are very destructive to camels, horses, and other domestic animals. Their skins are much valued and frequently taken to Europe. Those of a bright yellow color, with well-defined black spots, command very high prices. The arms of England anciently were represented as being supported by two leopards, afterward they were exchanged for lions.

‡ The wolf is generally between three and four feet long and two and a half feet high. It has not been found wild in Britain during the last one hundred and fifty years, but it still inhabits the woody tracts in the colder regions on the continent of Europe. They are solitary animals, and associate in numbers only when instigated by hunger, at which times, they are very ferocious—at other times they are timid and have recourse to stratagem: The fable of the “wolf in sheep’s clothing” is founded on this insidious part of their character. The fur of the common wolf is usually long and yellowish gray, with a black stripe across the fore legs. But there are several varieties. Some in high latitudes are perfectly white. There is also the black wolf, the Mexican wolf, the red wolf.



LEOPARD.—(*Felis Nimr Pardus.*) p. 72.





BEAR OF PALESTINE, (*Ursus Syriacus*,) p. 72.

Lions no longer

found in Palestine.

hides itself by day, but goes out at dusk of evening to destroy. The bear has a long clumsy body, with coarse hair and short thick legs—but what distinguishes it particularly, is its feet. It walks on the soles of the feet. It is a dreadful opponent when its anger is roused, because it is a very strong and resolute animal.*

I cannot stop long enough to tell you about all the ferocious animals that are mentioned in the Bible, nor all that the Bible relates about any of them. I will only refer you to several places where they are mentioned, which I wish you to read and remember. But first I will say that lions, although now no longer found in Palestine, were very common in that and the adjoining country in early times,† (Nahum ii. 11, 12; Ps. civ. 21.)

* The bear, however, when young, can be tamed and be made to dance and perform rude antics on his hinder feet. The name *Bruin*, sometimes applied to the bear, is the same as *brun* in French or *brown* in English. The clumsy shape, awkward motions and shaggy skin of the full-grown bear, has given rise to the epithets *bearish*, *bear-like* as terms of personal reproach; the former more usually relating to temper and manners, and the latter to outward appearance. The old saying or advice, “not to sell the bear-skins while they are in the woods”—meaning that a man should not promise what is not in his possession—gave rise to the appellation of *Bears* given to the sellers of stock (which they have not in possession) to be delivered at a future time, before which they expect to buy it. It signifies the sellers in these time-bargains on stock exchange.

† The Hebrews had seven different names for the lion, which they applied according to the age or sex of the animal; three of these names occur in Gen. xlix. 9. In English we give different names to the male and female. Their appearance is different. The female is only about two-thirds the size of the male—she has much

They were found in Lebanon, (Song of Solomon iv. 8,) and near the banks of the river Jordan, (Jer. xlix. 19; 2 Sam. xxiii. 20)—also in the plains near Tabor, (1 Kings xx. 36,) and in the fields of Bethlehem, (1 Sam. xvii. 34,) in the land of the Philistines, (Judges xiv. 5,) and in Egypt, (Isa. xxx. 6.) Yet the danger from them was not so great as to prevent people from going about their fields, (Prov. xxvi. 13,) or even from taking a journey. If it had been, Jacob would have been afraid to send Joseph from Hebron to Shechem. You will find the lion mentioned very often by way of comparison—when the Scriptures describe power and majesty or fierceness. (Prov. xix. 12—xx. 2; Ps. lxxviii. 6; Joel i. 6; 2 Sam. i. 23; 1 Chron. xii. 8; 2 Sam. xxiii. 30; Isa. v. 29; Ezek. xix. 1, 2; Job iv. 10; 1 Pet. v. 8; Ezek. xix. 1, 8; Hos. v. 14—xiii. 7—xi. 10; Amos i. 2—iii. 4, 8; Isa. xxxi. 4; Rev. v. 5, 6.) Leopards, too, were very common in Palestine, and the places where they were found

less daring, except when guarding her whelps (or cubs as some call them) but then she is extremely ferocious. It is said, that lions have not been found in Palestine since the times of the crusades, *i. e.*, since A. D. 1400. The African lion frequently measures his strength with the buffalo (or wild ox,) which is the most powerful of the ox tribe and is armed with very formidable horns. The lion is afraid to meet the buffalo on the open plain, and mostly overcomes him by stratagem. He watches for an opportunity of springing upon him, when he is not aware of his approach, and fixing his fangs in his throat, then striking his paw into the buffalo's face, he twists round the head and pins him to the ground by the horns, and holds him thus till he expires from loss of blood.

Leopard, wolf

and bear.

in greatest numbers were Nimrah, (mentioned in Numb. xxxii. 3,) Beth-Nimrah, (mentioned in Numb. xxxii. 36, and Josh. xiii. 27.) The waters of Nimrim, (mentioned in Isa. xv. 6, and Jer. xlviii. 34.) The prophet Habakkuk speaks of leopards for their swiftness, (i. 8.) Daniel (vii. 8) speaks of having seen in vision, a winged leopard, and Isaiah also mentions the leopard, (xi. 6.)

The wolf is mentioned by Habakkuk, (i. 8;) by Jeremiah, (v. 6;) and by Jacob. (Gen. xlix. 27.) Our Lord also compares false prophets to ravening wolves. (Matt. vii. 15.) The apostle Paul calls false teachers grievous wolves. (Acts xx. 29.) Wolves are also mentioned in Matt. x. 16; Luke x. 3; John x. 12; Isa. xi. 6—lxv. 25.

The bear is mentioned in Hosea xiii. 8; 2 Sam. xvii. 8, and in Dan. vii. 5. It will be a good lesson for you to turn to all these places and read what is said about these animals and their propensities, and consider what beautiful comparisons the Scriptures derive from this source. Now we will resume the history.

When Jacob saw Joseph's bloody coat, he felt sure that some such evil beast, as one of these I have described, had found him, and torn him in pieces and devoured him. He could not know what kind of beast it was, even if Joseph had been killed in this way, because there were so many

Jacob puts on sackcloth,and mourns for Joseph.

different kinds of large ferocious animals in the country, and perhaps he blamed himself for sending Joseph away. He was so shocked at the sight of the coat, and the thought it suggested to him, that he tore his clothes, as Reuben did, when he found Joseph was not in the pit, where they had put him. But he did more than this. He put on sackcloth, which was another way of showing sorrow in those times; and mourned for Joseph many days. Some persons suppose that Jacob mourned for Joseph until he heard he was alive, which was twenty-two years, as we shall see hereafter. But I do not know that we have any reason to believe that he used, during all that time, all those badges or signs of mourning which were common in those days in that country.

You know that it is customary in this country for people in mourning, to wear black clothing, but in other countries, and in former ages, different customs prevailed.* The Romans used to let their

* Herodotus speaks of it as a general practice among all people, except the Egyptians, to cut off their hair as a token of mourning, (Book ii. 36.) Plutarch informs us that among the Greeks, when any calamity befell them, the women cut their hair short, but the men wore it long, whereas in general the women wore their hair long and the men short. (See 1 Cor. xi. 6.) At the Friendly Isles, in the South Sea, cutting off the hair, is one of the mourning ceremonies. At Otaheite, the hair cut was thrown on the bier. (Cook and Clarke's Voyages, vol. i. p. 112.) Herodotus says that Mardonius, the Persian general, after one of his defeats, cut off his hair in token of his grief; and Plutarch says, that Alexander, in order to express his sorrow at the death of his friend Hephestion, ordered the manes of all his horses and mules to be cut off. The

Various modes

of mourning.

beards grow when they were in mourning. But the ancient Jews shaved off their beards and their hair. It was their custom too, to tear their clothes, as I have already told you, as soon as they heard any very bad news, or if they were present when any great crime against God was committed, such as blasphemy. They also struck their breasts with their hands or fists, and uncovered their heads, and threw dust or ashes on their heads instead of perfumes. They used also to wear soiled and torn clothes; they put on sackcloth or cloth made of hair, or coarse camelot, or some similar stuff, which was made tight and without folds, and consequently was disagreeable; whereas their clothing at other times was loose and flowing. They went barefoot and with the head uncovered, but with their faces covered, and sometimes they covered themselves with a robe or cloak or mantle to conceal their tears. Sometimes they fasted to show their mourning, eating nothing until after sundown, and then only coarse food, and drinking nothing but water. They used to shut themselves up and sit or lie upon ashes in silence, or sing mournful songs. This kind of mourning usually continued seven days—sometimes a month—and sometimes seventy days. Wi-

ancient Britons were very proud of their hair, and it was esteemed an honor among the ancient Gauls to have long hair. Hence Cæsar, upon subduing that people, made them cut off their hair in token of submission.

Jacob's sorrows great,he refused to be comforted.

dows sometimes mourned all their lives. (See 2 Sam. xiii. 19; Jer. ii. 37; Ez. xxiv. 17; Is. xv. 2; Lam. ii. 10; 1 Sam. xxxi. 13; Eccles. xxi. 13; Numb. xx. 30; Deut. iii. 4, 8; Gen. l. 3.) So that their mourning was not a mere ceremony, as it is in many cases with us.

We are not informed particularly in what way Jacob mourned, except that he tore his garments and put on sackcloth, but it is probable he mourned in some of the ways I have described. Nor do we know how many days he mourned, but as his sorrow was very great, and he refused to be comforted, we have reason to believe it was long. When Jacob's children saw how deep his sorrow was, they all tried to comfort him. He had but one daughter, and only one grand-daughter, but he had daughters-in-law. His father, Isaac, was also alive at that time, and even lived twelve years after that, but we are not told whether he was present. But what think you, could his older sons say to comfort him? They might have told him that perhaps Joseph was not dead, because they did not find any part of his body, but only his coat, and he might have escaped. Still Jacob refused all hopes and consolation; and they were so hard-hearted and cruel to their father, that they would not tell him the truth. Therefore we must believe that if they said any thing to comfort him, they

Joseph's reflections

in captivity.

were insincere and hypocritical. Even Reuben and Judah, who were the only brothers that showed the least mark of favor for Joseph, seem to have been as unfeeling to their father in his sorrow as the rest, for they were willing to let their father go down to the grave mourning for Joseph, rather than tell him the truth. If they had told him the truth, he might have gone, or sent to Egypt and brought him back.

Let us now return to Joseph, who had been sold as a slave to the Ishmaelites and Midianites. How unhappy he must have been, when these men took him away against his will. He probably knew what sort of men they were, and what they were going to do with him. They were taking him to a strange country, where he had no friends. There he would be made to do hard work, and might reasonably expect to be beaten, when he did not deserve it.* And then again, when he thought of his father and Benjamin, his younger brother; that perhaps he would never see them again, he must have been very sorrowful. It was well for him that he had a pious father, who, doubtless, had often talked with him about the Providence of God.

* But in all the countries of the East, and especially in Egypt, we are told, slaves were treated, in general, very kindly, although Joseph, as we learn from Ps. cv. 18, 22, "was laid in iron," and "his feet were hurt with fetters," during, at least, a part of the time he was a slave.

His trustin Providence.

It was well that he had given attention to what his father taught him. He knew, as we shall see by and by, a great deal about God. He knew that God can do all things, that God sees and knows all things, and that nothing can come to pass against God's will. He knew too, that every one who fears God and loves him, and tries to please him, will come out well at last. Such thoughts as these only, could have given him comfort and courage in his unhappy condition.

CHAPTER IV.

The Arab merchants reach Egypt

with Joseph in their company.

THE Arab merchants, as we may call them—for I told you that they all came from Arabia—went forward with Joseph in their company. Nothing remarkable happened to him on the way, so far as we know. At length they reached Egypt, and the city in which the king of that country lived. I do not know that any body could tell you with certainty, what the name of that city was:* for the time when the things we are speaking of happened, was about 3576 years ago. Probably it was the city of On—the same city that was afterward called Heliopolis, whose inhabitants were reputed to be the wisest of the Egyptians. Now look on the map of Egypt. What is the name of that large

* Some learned men think it was Memphis, which was farther south than Heliopolis, and not far from the lake Maeris, and the pyramids. You may see it on the map. The Bible does not inform us what the name of the city was. But Memphis was very much celebrated afterward as the residence of the Pharaohs, and on this account, its splendor and riches, (the consequence of its commerce,) became so great as to eclipse ancient Thebes. The ruins on the site of the ancient city of Memphis give some idea of its former greatness. It contained magnificent temples, and among others that of the idol god Apis. When the Persians were masters of Egypt they converted the citadel of Memphis into a strong garrison. In after times, a temple was built in the city in honor of Alexander the Great.

Description ofan obelisk.

river which runs northwardly through that country, and flows into the Mediterranean Sea?

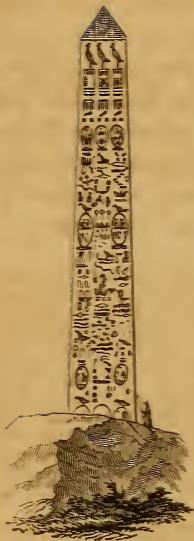
All. The river Nile.

Right. You observe how this river divides into several branches, or smaller streams, before it reaches the sea. Just above, and not far from the place where the river begins to divide itself, you will see the name Heliopolis, which is supposed to be the same as On. This place is about two hours ride from Cairo.* It is now a ploughed field. One obelisk only remains. It is formed of a well-polished block of Thebaic stone, sixty-eight feet high without the base. But perhaps you do not know what an obelisk is? I dare say you have seen the picture of a pyramid.

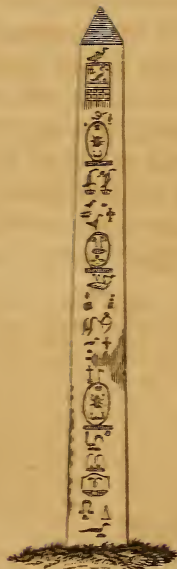
All. Yes, sir.

Well—an obelisk is a sort of pyramid. It has four sides. It is very slender and very high. Obelisks usually were raised for ornament in some public place, and had inscriptions or hieroglyphics

* Cairo was for a long time the residence of the Caliphs or successors of Mahomet, of whom Omar was the first. The original name was El-Cahera, which signifies *The Victorious*. It was called Grand Cairo on account of the number of its inhabitants. The ancient city was composed of three others, about a mile distant from each other. It was situated at the place of an ancient city which, it is said, was built by some captives, escaped from Babylon, who gave it the name of the city they came from. The castle of Cairo was built by Saladin or Salaheddin, the famous sultan of Egypt and Syria, and one of the greatest conquerors of the 12th century. He died at Damascus, A. D. 1193 at the age of 57 years, after a reign of 24 years in Egypt, and 19 years in Syria, leaving seventeen sons, who divided his states among themselves.



CLEOPATRA'S OBELISK



OBELISK OF MATÆREA, p. 83.

Remains of the

city of On.

written upon them. One of these structures remains, where the city of On was.* This city was in ruins, nineteen hundred years ago, but an ancient geographer, who lived about fifty years before the birth of Christ, whose name was Strabo, described the ruins, as very splendid in his times. Learned men tell us, that the name ON signifies *light*, and Heliopolis signifies, city of the Sun. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of a city, called Beth-Shemesh,† which signifies House of the Sun, (Jer. xliii. 13.) All these names probably belong to the same place, and signify pretty much the same thing—only

* The works which the Egyptians erected were immense. Both their obelisks and pyramids are looked upon with amazement, and it has been the study of the world to devise by what mechanical powers they were effected. Their ramparts, sluices, canals and lakes have never been surpassed, either in number or magnificence, by any people in the world. Their sculptures, though executed in so early an age, are represented, in many instances, as very curious and precise. Frederick Hasselquist, a learned Swede, in his travels, assures us, that he could plainly distinguish every bird, and the particular species of bird, upon the obelisk at Matarea. Mr. Bryant says, the Arabians or Cushites raised the most ancient obelisks in Egypt, which were formed of one piece, yet of an amazing size, and the granite out of which they are cut, so hard that scarcely any tool now-a-days can make any impression upon it. It is a matter of wonder, how they were originally wrought and engraved. The villages of Luxor and Carnac, it is said, are by far the largest and most magnificent scenes of ruins in Egypt—much more extensive and stupendous than those of Thebes and Dendera united. In 1831, the French removed an obelisk from Luxor to Paris. It was a work of great difficulty. It was performed under the direction of two engineers, whose names were Lebas and Verninac.

† There are fifty or more different names in the Old Testament which begin with *Beth*, which is also the name of the second letter in the Hebrew alphabet. It always signifies *house*, or habitation, as Beth-el, *house of God*, Beth-lehem, *house of bread*, Beth-nimrah, *house of rebellion*.

The merchants

sell Joseph.

On, is an Egyptian word, Beth-Shemesh,* a Hebrew word, and Heliopolis a Greek word; and this is probably the place to which the Arab merchants took Joseph.

Now look upon the map and trace with the eye, the course of their journey from Gilead south of Damascus to Dothan, and from thence to the city of On or Heliopolis near the river Nile in Egypt. You see what a long journey they had, and the way they went. This will give you some idea of the course of trade, in those times, from this direction.

Having arrived at the city, the next thing was to take Joseph into the market to sell him. It was not long before an eminent man came to them, who was willing to buy him. He was an Egyptian. His name was Potiphar. He was an officer of Pharaoh, a captain of his guard. This man bought Joseph. We do not know how much he gave for him, but probably much more than the Ishmaelites gave. Now you must think of Joseph as a youth in a strange country, ignorant of the language† of

* In this district of the country, there is a place, still called *Beer-sheems* which signifies *well of the Sun*, and is a lasting memorial of the worship of the sun in ancient times at that place.

† Learned men inform us that there was a resemblance between the Egyptian language and the Hebrew, although the Phœnician language was more like the Hebrew than the Egyptian; for that was, according to what Jerome, an ancient commentator, says intermediate between the Egyptian and the Hebrew, though somewhat nearer to the Hebrew. And so are the French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese languages similar; yet the people of these

Length of time Joseph

resided in Egypt.

the people, and of course unable to understand what Potiphar or the Arabs said, when they were making the bargain. But Potiphar took him to his house. What kind of work he set him to do at first, we do not know, but as he bought him for a slave, it is not improbable that he sent him to work in the fields—if it was the season in which such work was done—with other slaves. Now it is proper to tell you something about Egypt, as it was in this country Joseph spent all the rest of his life. Can any of you tell me how long a time this was? Joseph was about seventeen years old, when he was taken to Egypt, and he died at the age of one hundred and ten years. Deduct seventeen years from one hundred and ten years, and there remain how many?

All. Ninety-three years.

Then Joseph lived in Egypt ninety-three years.

Egypt, it is supposed, was settled by Mizraim,* a son of Ham, and grandson of Noah. (Gen. x. 6.)

different nations cannot understand each other without considerable study. There was a manifest resemblance between all the Oriental languages; and the languages of Phœnicia, Arabia and Egypt seem originally to have been little more than dialects of the same tongue.

* The name given to Mizraim in profane history is Menes, and it is supposed that he laid the foundation of the Egyptian monarchy 2188 before Christ, or about 160 years after the universal deluge. It is supposed the first pyramids were begun about 2095 before Christ, which was only 93 years after the beginning of the Egyptian monarchy, and 152 years after the building of the Tower of Babel. I advise you to read the ancient history of the Egyptians in the first volume of Rollin's Ancient History.

Description of

the country

Of course it has been cultivated almost as long as any other country. Some persons think China was settled by another grandson of Noah. But we cannot prove that so well, as we can the settlement of Egypt. The name given to Egypt in the Hebrew Bible, is Mizraim or Mitsraim, and so the Hebrews called the country. It is celebrated for its pyramids and other works of art.* The country may be described as a large valley, with a large river running through it from the south toward the north, which is called the Nile. Some learned men think the word *Nile* is made up of two Egyptian words, which signify *rising at certain periods*, for which that river is remarkable, as I shall tell you hereafter. Others say that *Nile* is a Greek word, and not the name the Egyptians used. You observe the river divides into branches before it comes to the sea, and incloses a triangular space of land. This space is sometimes called the Delta, because

* The Greeks and the Romans afterward had possession of this country, and the monuments of art which they left are characterized by the harmony of their proportions and the elegance of their style, whereas the monuments of the ancient Egyptians astonish us by their gigantic height and the profusion of grotesque statues. The Persians, who also once conquered this country, left no trace of their dominion, but later conquerors have: for even to the present day this country has, in the Arabs, Mamelukes and Turks, living memorials of the more modern revolutions it has undergone. The Copts are the real descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and they retain to some extent their physiognomy, their manners and their language. But they are now like strangers in the land over which their ancestors reigned. The words of the prophet Ezekiel (xxix. 14—xxx. 13,) have long since been fulfilled: Egypt has become a *base kingdom—the basest of kingdoms*.

Divisions

of Egypt.

its form resembles a letter of the Greek alphabet (Δ) called Delta or D.* Egypt, in ancient times, was divided into upper and lower Egypt. Upper Egypt was called Thebais from Thebes, its chief city.† It is supposed that lower Egypt only was settled by Mizraim, and Strabo, the ancient geographer I spoke of, includes in Egypt nothing more than the valley watered by the Nile between lat. $24^{\circ} 3'$ and $31^{\circ} 37'$. The river Nile rises far south of this in the torrid zone, about seven or ten degrees north of the equator.‡

* Each angle of the Δ Delta was graced with a city which, in its time, was of great repute. At the eastern angle stood Pelusium, twenty stadia from the sea, and on the brink of the Arabian desert. The Hebrews called it Sin. It was particularly fortified to prevent an irruption from that quarter. At the western angle was Alexandria, built by Alexander after his conquest of the country. This city was the birth-place of Euclid, of Appian and Origen, and famous for its immense library and school, and it was, during the reigns of the Ptolemies, the royal residence. For ages it was the great emporium of the world, carrying on a most extensive commerce, of which it was itself the centre. At the southern or vertical angle was the city of Cercasora, now called Eksas, on the left bank of the Nile.

† Upper Egypt or Thebaid, seems to be called Pathros in Scripture, as distinguished from the Lower, properly called Caphtor or Egypt. (Is. xi. 11; Ezek. xxix. 14; Jer. xlv. 1; Ezek. xxx. 14, 16; Deut. ii. 23; Jer. xlvii. 4.)

‡ Egypt is otherwise divided into three parts, *viz.* *Upper Egypt*—from Syene to the city Chemnis. (The chief city of Upper Egypt was Thebes or Diospolis.) *Middle Egypt*, which extends from Chemnis or Panopolis to Cercasora, (chief city, Memphis)—*Lower Egypt*, which comprised the Delta (Δ) and the land on both sides of it. This part was full of cities, of which Sais is particularly worthy of note. South of Egypt (or above it on the Nile) was Ethiopia, although the countries just above Egypt are usually included under the name of Nubia, they are for the most part a desert of sand, which have, from very early times, been traversed by marauding Nomades. Along the Red Sea or Arabian Gulf is

Fertility caused by the

overflow of the Nile.

Egypt depends on the river Nile for water. There is very little rain in Egypt, except near the Mediterranean Sea. The water, when filtered, is very pleasant to drink. At Alexandria the people collect rain water to drink at certain seasons when the river is low. The land has always been very fertile. It is made so by the Nile, which overflows its banks and deposits mud; or as some call it—*sile* or *silt*. When the river is at its highest rise, the whole valley looks like a lake, studded with spires of towns, which appear like scattered islands. The harvest depends on the overflowing of the Nile. The Egyptians have erected in the Nile, pillars to measure the height of the water called Mik-jas or Nilometers.* When the waters go down

a rocky chain of mountains. In Nubia, the Nile takes a great bend to the west; is full of rocks, and its navigation therefore difficult; yet the banks are fruitful, inhabited and rich in the monuments of antiquity. If you proceed still farther up the Nile (from 16° north latitude toward the equator,) the character of the country changes; fruitful districts commence, and their products are rich and costly, such as gold and incense, and consequently it was famous for its commerce. This country lies between two rivers—the Nile on the west side, and the Astaborus (Tacazze) which empties into the Nile on the east—and extended to the sources of the Nile. Here was the Meroe spoken of by Herodotus, having a capital of the same name. (Herodotus Book ii. § 29.) Near Syene, in Upper Egypt, is the island of Philae, which was the most distant military post of the Romans on that frontier. The Arabs call it by a name (Djéziré-el-Hhéif) which signifies *where it does not rain*.

* Mentelle, a learned French geographer, says—"The ancient Egyptians constructed a kind of well, into which the water of the Nile entered, the object of which was to ascertain the degree of its augmentation. These wells were called *Nilometers*. Others describe the Nilometer as consisting of a rod or pillar marked with

Joseph's probable

employment.

into the channel, the people cast seed on the mud and it produces great plenty, with little labor. There are a great many fish in the Nile, and this fact is referred to in Numb. xi. 5; Isa. xix. 8. Egypt, or Mitsraim as the Hebrews called it, (Gen. x. 6) was a very fertile country. The people raised a great deal of corn, and in after times, the merchants of Rome and Greece used to send to that country to buy grain and things that were manufactured there. Rome, in particular, suffered at times great scarcity, and imported from Egypt immense quantities of grain.

Now we will return to Joseph. As he was a shepherd's or herdman's boy, it is not improbable that his master employed him at some labor in the fields, in company with other slaves. Now think of Joseph in the fields, on the bank of the great Nile, working with stupid or ignorant men, whom he could not talk with. The food and the clothing of slaves is not commonly very good. This was a

the necessary divisions, for the purpose of ascertaining the proportionate increases of the flood of the Nile. Some Arabian writers say that these instruments were first set up by Joseph during his regency in Egypt. The measure of it was sixteen cubits. Near Thebes, there are two colossal statues—about sixty feet high—in a sitting posture, covered with hieroglyphics, and inscriptions in Greek and Latin. One of them is of stone and perfectly entire—the other is mutilated. They are placed on a very fertile spot and have stood there probably more than three thousand years. From the marks on their bases, it is conjectured they were the Nilometers by which the ancient Thebans measured the rise of the Nile. Any structure designed to answer this purpose may properly be called a Nilometer.

Joseph in favorwith Potiphar.

great change for Joseph. Only a few days, or at most, a few weeks before, he lived happily at Hebron, with his father and Benjamin, and perhaps his grandfather Isaac, who was still alive, though he was very old—by all of whom he was greatly beloved. Now he was a poor, despised slave, employed at work he had not been used to—yet as he was a pious youth and trusted in God's over-ruling Providence, he knew that miserable as his condition was, it would be well with him at last.

It was not long before his condition was changed for the better; for God made every thing to prosper which he undertook to do for his master, and his master observed it. This was the way by which God brought Joseph into favor with Potiphar. In the same way, God commended Isaac to Abimelech, (Gen. xxvi. 28,) and Jacob to Laban. (Gen. xxx. 27.) When Potiphar found that Joseph was so useful and profitable to him, and that he was worth more to him than his other slaves, he treated him kindly and made him overseer of his house and of the other slaves. In this way he showed his confidence in Joseph; and as Potiphar was a great man and an officer of the king, it is probable he was very rich also; so that we may believe he trusted Joseph with the management of many weighty and important matters. He served his master faithfully in his new situation and thanked

Joseph appointed

overseer by Potiphar.

God, no doubt, for being so good to him in his misfortunes. All that Joseph advised or did, prospered ; so much so, that Potiphar did not trouble himself with looking after any thing, but left all to Joseph. He did not even require Joseph to give him any account of his doings, and the Bible informs us, that Potiphar did not even know any thing that he had, except the bread that he eat. You must not suppose from this that Potiphar did not know that he had possessions and probably large possessions, nor that he ate nothing but what we should call bread ; for the word *bread* means, in the Scriptures, the same as the word *food*. This is its meaning in the Lord's prayer.

In this way Joseph lived very happily several years ; we do not know how long, because we do not know how soon it was after he was sold to Potiphar, that he was appointed overseer. But we do know that he was Potiphar's slave about ten years in all ; that is, until he was about twenty-seven years old. All the while he was Potiphar's overseer, his condition was so comfortable, that he might almost have forgotten he was a slave and much of his former unhappiness. Still he could not forget his father and his brother Benjamin, and we may readily believe, he was often anxious to know whether they were alive and well.

At length Joseph's fortunes changed and he fell

A change inJoseph's fortunes

again into a very unhappy condition. Yet Joseph did not do any thing wrong, which was the cause of it: On the contrary, it was because he would not consent to do wrong to his master and commit a sin against God, that the other troubles, of which I am now to speak, came upon him. Some of you may think, perhaps, that God would not have let him fall into trouble and distress, if he was faithful and true to his duty; but if you should think so, you would be very much mistaken. God sometimes, indeed often, lets good men come into distress and trouble, in order to make them better. In trouble and distress, good men often learn to be patient, and to put greater confidence in God's Providence and goodness. The Bible teaches us, that as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. (Ps. ciii. 13.) But then again, it teaches us, that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (Heb. xii. 6.) We must not conclude then, when we see a man fall into great misfortunes, that he is a bad man. Many good men come to poverty, or get into prison, upon a false accusation, as Joseph did, or suffer in some other way. A man may live piously and honorably and yet suffer many afflictions. So it was with Joseph. He resolved firmly that he would not do a wicked thing, and thereby he got out of favor

Wicked persuasions ofPotiphar's wife

with Potiphar, and into great trouble. We should not be able to explain or understand this, if good men were to suffer for their goodness, in this way always. But that never happens. God always makes a good man very happy at last, and then they see that their troubles were very profitable to them. Some of you perhaps, would like to ask, how that can happen, when a good man is suddenly destroyed, as by shipwreck or by an earthquake, or some dreadful accident; for then he is dead. But you must remember, that there is another life after this, which never ends. In that life, the good will be much happier than we can understand now. But almost always, good and pious men, who fall into great trials and troubles, come out of them, and are happy again, before they die; and this happened to Joseph. Now I will proceed with the history.

Potiphar had a very wicked wife, and she tried to persuade Joseph to very wicked conduct; which would have been dishonorable to his master and very offensive to Almighty God. Joseph was very much tried, because he knew he should make Potiphar's wife very angry with him if he refused to do as she bid him, and yet he wisely thought it was much better to suffer, than to be wicked. He said to her, that his master did not concern himself with what was in his house and had committed

Joseph ran awayfrom Potiphar's wife

every thing to his care—that no one in the house was greater than he, and that he could not be so ungrateful to his master; much less, could he commit so great wickedness and sin against God. At length he ran away, but as he was about to run, she caught his outer garment and held it, so that he ran away without it. She then showed the garment to Potiphar, and made a false accusation against him. Joseph's master was angry with him and put him into prison, where he was confined with the king's prisoners.

Joseph's conduct on this occasion is very much to be commended in every respect. He felt gratitude to his master, who had favored him so much above the other slaves; and he would not injure him. That was right and very honorable conduct. Then again—Joseph felt his duty to God, and he would not violate it on any account. That was excellent; I wish every one of you would always act on that principle. He would rather the wicked woman should be angry with him, and do all she could to bring him into trouble, than sin against God. Our blessed Saviour once said, "Fear not those that can kill the body, and after that, have no power, but fear him, who can destroy both soul and body in hell." Joseph ran away from her, when he found he could not persuade her to be virtuous herself, or allow him to be so, and so

Necessity ofavoiding temptation.

should every one do in the same circumstances. We ought always to get out of the way of every wicked person who would persuade or tempt us to do wrong. But I am not quite sure, that Potiphar fully believed what his wife told him against Joseph; because if he had, it is probable, he would have put him to death immediately; for in those times, and in that country, those who had power, were very arbitrary, and it is not probable a great man, like Potiphar, would care much about the life of a slave, if he felt quite sure, he had been guilty of such bad conduct as his wife accused Joseph of. But whether he did believe it or not, this part of the history shows how wonderfully God took care of Joseph, and how he not only restrained Potiphar from taking Joseph's life, but made him do that very thing, which was one of the means of advancing Joseph to great honor.

The prison in which Joseph was confined is called by Moses, Beth-ha-sohar, which signifies the "House of roundness," or the "round-house." It was probably a tower and a circular building. The same word is applied in the Scriptures to the moon on account of its roundness, (Cant. vii. 3; See Judges viii. 21; Isa. iii. 18, where it is used to signify round ornaments.) Dr. Johnson says, a constable's prison, in England, was formerly called a round-house. Unhappy as Joseph was, at this time,

Joseph castinto prison.

he had done nothing to repent of. He had only done his duty, and it must have given him comfort, when he thought that God sees and knows all that is said and done, and that he loves those who reverence him and do their duty, and that he never forsakes them, but always helps them out of their troubles. You must now think of Joseph in prison, confined with—we do not know whom,—but perhaps with thieves and murderers, and other bad men. Perhaps he was put into a dungeon at first, (Ps. cv. 18, 22,) but we do not know how that was. He did not know how long he was to be confined, nor whether he would ever get out. Now observe that Potiphar appears to have acted upon his own authority; because the Bible says *he* put him into prison. In our country, you know, it would be different;—no man in this state, has any such arbitrary power. If one man thinks another has done wrong, he must go to a magistrate, and make his complaint, and then the magistrate will decide whether he should be put into prison. Besides this, a man who is accused of a crime, has a right to have a trial in a short time, and to have witnesses called in his favor, and if the judge and the jury think he is not guilty, they will let him go. But even if they believe him guilty, and that the laws require he should be punished by imprisonment, the judges decide how long he shall be

Arbitrary conduct

men in power.

imprisoned for the crime, and after that, he is suffered to go at large again. But Joseph was shut up in prison by his master, without any trial, or impartial judge to condemn him, and without any time fixed for his imprisonment, and there, he was kept three years; and even then, Potiphar did not take him out of prison, as we shall see hereafter.

Now you understand what I meant, when I said that in those times, men who had power, were very arbitrary. Such men were despotic, and often cruel, and acted as they chose, without being controlled by the law or a judge. You can hardly conceive how much more happy we are, than many other people, even in our times, in this respect. In this state, the humblest man and little boys cannot be deprived of their liberty as Joseph was. We have laws, and we have judges to decide according to the laws, and to take care that no one is wrongfully injured by false accusations, or in any other way.* We owe these blessings to Almighty God. He has given us the Bible, from which we have obtained a better knowledge of what is right and what is wrong; as well as of the duties which God

* In England and in the United States, the laws provide a short way by which a person in prison, under accusation of having committed a crime, may be brought before a judge, and (except in cases of very great crimes) the prisoner may be let out of prison by the judge, if he gives bail, (which is a kind of surety) for his appearing at court at the time of trial, and surrendering himself to the officers of the law, if he should be condemned.

Joseph makes

no defense

requires men to perform toward him and toward each other. Those men who do not love the Bible, do not know how many of their civil, social and political blessings they owe to it

Some of you may wish to ask, whether Joseph did not tell Potiphar the truth, or whether he went to prison without saying a word in his own defense. Josephus, a learned Jew, who was born A. D., 37, says that Joseph did not make any defense of himself, nor give any account of the circumstances, but silently went to prison. (Antiq. B. 2, ch. v, § 1.) But I do not suppose Josephus had any more knowledge of that matter, than he could derive from the Bible; and the Bible does not say, whether Joseph protested his innocence or not. It would be very natural for him to do so, and we find that he did declare his innocence afterward, to Pharaoh's chief butler. (Gen. xl. 14, 15.) Yet as Joseph must have had a great regard for his master, and as he was a very pious and prudent young man, he might have been unwilling to make his master unhappy, by telling him what a wicked woman his wife was. Some learned men think that he did tell him, and that Moses omitted to put it into the narrative, just as he omitted telling us, in the proper place, about Joseph's cries and entreaties, when his brethren were about to put him into the pit, or sell him to the Ishmaelites; (Gen.

The duty of theprison-keeper.

xlii. 21, 22,) and they suppose, Potiphar for that reason, did not fully believe the accusation. But we cannot know, with certainty, any more than the Bible informs us. Every thing else is conjecture, and it is not best to mix up our conjectures with the Bible. If we get into the habit of doing so, it will do us harm, as I have no doubt it has a great many persons. The best answer we can give to all such questions is, "We do not know," and I give you that answer to this question.

You know that now-a-days, every prison has a keeper, whose business it is to watch the prisoners; —and this prison had one. The keeper was not Potiphar, but probably a deputy or lieutenant under him. It was a great change for Joseph to be taken from Potiphar's house and put into prison, to be restrained and watched as if he was a bad man. Before this, he could go where he pleased, and had enough to do, which is a great means of happiness to every one, to boys, as well as to men. Now, he could not go any where, and had nothing to do; his master was angry with him, and he seemed to be forsaken by all the world. Yet we have no reason to believe, that Joseph was impatient, or lost his confidence in God, while he was in this unhappy condition.

How unlike Joseph in this respect are most young persons. Some get out of patience and fret,

God's blessing uponJoseph in prison.

if it rains, when they wish to take a walk, or if they happen to lose a trifle, they are generally discomposed. Many persons would rage and rave, if they were to lose every thing, and be cast into prison without deserving it, as happened to Joseph. I am afraid that some of you would be very peevish, if you were denied some gratification, which your teachers thought improper for you. But Joseph submitted patiently to very bad treatment, and you should learn to bear with patience and fortitude, not only disappointments and misfortunes, but even injuries. That is a great lesson, and it takes most persons long to learn it; and many never learn it at all.

But Joseph very soon found that God had not forgotten him, though he was in prison. For the Bible informs us, that the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. It is very probable that the keeper knew Joseph before; I do not see how it could well be otherwise, if the keeper of the prison was a deputy under Potiphar, because his business would often call him to Potiphar's house, where Joseph was the chief overseer. However this may be, the keeper of the prison gave Joseph a great deal of liberty. He committed all the prisoners to Joseph's care, and Joseph directed whatever they did. Of course, Joseph

His employmentin prison.

could go around among the prisoners and speak with them. This was employment for him, which was much better than sitting still and doing nothing. It was a great relief for the overseer of the prison, who, no doubt, was very glad to get rid of his duties; for we are told that he did not look to any thing under his care, because the Lord was with Joseph, and made every thing prosper which he undertook. It is very remarkable that a prisoner, like Joseph, should have gained the confidence of the keeper of the prison so fully as he did;—much more remarkable than in the instance of Potiphar, his first master; and it shows how carefully God watched over Joseph.

CHAPTER V.

Ten Pharaohs spoken of

in the Bible.

THE king of Egypt, (or as the Hebrews named the country, the king of Mizraim,) was called Pharaoh. Some of you may think this was his proper personal name; but it was not,—it was a name common to most, if not all of the kings of that country. There are ten Pharaoh's mentioned in the Bible: one lived in Abraham's time; (Gen. xii.) another lived at the time we are speaking of;—in Joseph's time; (Gen. xli.) another lived when Moses was born; and this Pharaoh knew not Joseph. (Exod. i. 8.) Moses and Aaron were sent to another Pharaoh, and this one was drowned in the Red Sea. (Exod. xiv.) Another Pharaoh lived in the times of David. The sixth Pharaoh spoken of in the Scriptures, was a brother-in-law of king Solomon; but this one may be the same that lived in David's time. (1 Kings iii. 1.) The seventh spoken of, is Pharaoh Shishac. (1 Kings xi. 14.) The eighth, is Pharaoh So or Sua, who lived in king Hosea's time. (2 Kings xvii.) The ninth was Pharaoh Necho. (2 Kings xxiii.) And the tenth, Pharaoh Hophra or Vaphra. (Jer. xxxvii.)

The word Pharaoh

a title.

Now this proves that the word PHARAOH is a title, or a name common to the kings of Egypt, and not a personal or proper name, because Abraham lived as much as thirteen hundred years before Jeremiah, and yet during all that interval of time, we find the name Pharaoh applied to the kings of Egypt. Indeed, this name was applied to the kings of Egypt, till Egypt was conquered by the Persians.* Some learned men think that the name signifies *Crocodile*,† which was one of the animals the Egyptians worshiped. Others say that in the Coptic language, Phi-oura signifies “the king,” and they suppose that is the same word as Pharaoh, only written a little differently. Others think it was an epithet applied by the Egyptians to their kings, as the Romans employed the word Cæsar, and the Russians the word Czar, and as the Philistines the name Abimeleck. Others suppose, that the Egyptians borrowed this word

* Cambyzes, the son of Cyrus, and second king of Persia, subdued Egypt. He was a cruel prince. In a fit of passion, he put his own brother to death, and died himself 522 years B. C., of a wound in his thigh, inflicted by himself. We should be careful not to confound this prince with Cambyzes, the father of Cyrus, who married Mandane, the daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes.

† A voracious animal, which is abundant in the Nile. Its eggs resemble those of a goose. It buries them in the sand about a foot deep. The young ones escape to the water as soon as they are hatched. It is said these animals are seldom found as far down the river, as Cairo. There is another species of Crocodile which lives entirely on the land, which is found in caverns, and the mountains near the Nile.

Pharaoh's butler

and baker.

from the Arabs, and that it means one who is exalted. Others think, it is taken from a word which signifies the hair of the head. All we certainly know is, that it was not the proper personal name of the king, and it is very difficult for us to find out, what were the real names of the Pharaoh's mentioned in the Bible;* because the early history of Egypt is very much confused. But as the Scriptures call this king Pharaoh or Pharoh, we will call him by that name.

Kings you know, live in palaces, and appear in greater splendor than other men. They commonly have a great many servants or ministers, some of whom, are great men, and these have other servants under them. The custom was the same in those early times, I suppose, as it is now, in this and many other respects. Among the officers of Pharaoh, there were two who offended him. One was called the chief of the butlers, and the other, the chief of the bakers, and Pharaoh put them in custody, in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison in which Joseph was confined. The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to take care

* Some think the proper name of the Pharaoh who reigned when Joseph was brought into Egypt was Rameses Menos, and that the name of the Pharaoh who reigned when Moses was born, was Apachnas. Others think this latter was Rameses Maimum. The king who first began to oppress the Israelites before the birth of Moses, some suppose was Palmanothes, or Phamenothe, whom the Greeks called Amenophis.

Joseph attended the

butler and baker.

of them, and he did so, a whole year. Joseph waited or attended upon them, but he was not their slave. You know what a baker is,* but can you tell me, David, what was the business of the butler?

David. His business was to take care of the king's wine and bring it to him to drink.

That is near enough. He was a sort of cup-bearer. In France, the kings formerly had an officer somewhat like this. He was called grand-

*The art of baking is very ancient, (Gen. xviii. 6,) and it cost a great labor to bring it to its present perfection. At first, we are told, the grain was softened by boiling—afterward, it was pounded in a mortar—after that hand mills were invented for grinding it, and finally flouring mills, such as we have. At first cakes of the meal were baked on coals. Ovens for baking bread were afterward invented in the East. Regular bakers were not introduced into Rome, until that city had been built 583 years, or about 169 years before the birth of Christ, and they were so much esteemed, on account of the usefulness of their employment, that they were occasionally admitted into the Roman Senate. To enable them to give more time to the study of their business, bakers were exempted by the laws of Rome, from troublesome offices—such as guardianships—to which other Roman citizens were liable. In the reign of Augustus (which closed shortly after the birth of our Saviour,) there were 329 public bakeries in the city of Rome, and all of them were in the hands of Greeks, who were the only persons that knew how to make good bread. This was long after Joseph's day, and the art, no doubt, had become much improved in the mean time. Little boys, and even many grown men, who enjoy all the benefits of the finest human inventions, do not consider, what a long time it took, and how much labor and thought it cost to complete them. I dare say, the whole process of baking seems very trivial to many persons. Nothing appears to them more easy than to grind corn, and then make the flour into paste, and then bake it in an oven. But if nobody had lived before them to invent these things, it is pretty certain they would starve before they could learn how to do these things. That would be a sufficient reason, if there were none better, why they should not waste their bread.

The butler and baker madesad by a dream.

echanson, or the great cup-bearer. The business of the chief of the bakers was to attend to the king's provisions and food. What they did, to offend the king, we do not know; but some suppose they attempted to poison him. This, however, is a mere conjecture, and there is no other foundation for it, than the nature of their employment. They might have offended the king in many other ways. We do not know what they did, and it is not important that we should.

After these two officers had been in Joseph's care a whole year, as he came to them one morning, he observed they were very sad, and he asked them, why they looked so sad. They told him they had dreamed a dream, but there was no one to interpret it. In fact, each had a dream, which related to his particular office. The butler dreamed about a vine and cups; and the baker dreamed about baskets and trays, filled with pastry. The Bible says, that "each dreamed according to the interpretation of his dream," which I suppose means, that the dream of each, resembled the interpretation which Joseph gave of it, which was the true one. It is remarkable, that while the dreams were very much alike in the general, they signified opposite things. When they told Joseph why they were sad, he requested them to tell him their dreams. Perhaps they thought, if they were al-

Joseph superior to theEgyptians in knowledge.

lowed to go out of prison, they might find some one who could put their minds at ease, by telling them what their dreams signified. But if that was their meaning, Joseph set them right, by telling them that no human art can enable any one to interpret a dream:—that God only, can explain the true meaning of dreams. He did not ask them therefore to tell him their dreams, because he thought himself wise enough to interpret them, but because he expected that God would reveal to him their meaning, if indeed their dreams proceeded from God. Here we observe that Joseph spoke to those idolatrous Egyptians of the true God. If you remember what I told you of the longevity of the patriarchs, you will not be at a loss to understand, how Joseph came to be so much superior to the Egyptians in his knowledge of the true religion. How many of the persons who lived between Adam and Jacob were necessary to hand down knowledge from one to the other? You may answer Samuel.

Samuel. Three. Methuselah, Noah and Heber.

Heber I told you did not die, till after Abraham died, nor until Jacob was more than fifteen years old. But the Egyptians were the descendants of Mizraim, the son of Ham, and they were allowed, some time before, as well as the other descendants of Noah, to fall into idolatry. Only Abraham was called, and the true knowledge of God, was soon

The chief butlerrelates his dream

confined to his posterity. But let us proceed with the history.

The chief butler, first told his dream. He said: "In my dream, a vine appeared before me, and on the vine three branches; they seemed to bud and to shoot forth blossoms, and the clusters thereof, became ripe grapes, and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

I will mention to you a peculiar thing about this passage. You find in it terms or names, for all the parts of the vegetation of a vine: the *vine* itself, *vine branches*, *budding*, *blossoming*, *ripening*, *cluster of grapes*, *the berries* or *single grapes*. So that if you wish to know what these terms are in English or German or French or Spanish or Greek or Latin or Hebrew or any other language, you have only to read this 10th verse of the 40th chapter of Genesis, in the particular language, in which you wish to know them.

It may be useful to notice such particulars, and if you get into the habit of doing so, it will make you more considerate and exact in your reading.

The chief butler having related his dream, was curious, we may well suppose, to know how Joseph would interpret it, and his curiosity was soon satisfied; for Joseph immediately replied: "This is its

Joseph derived his

knowledge from God.

interpretation. The three branches are three days. Within three days, Pharaoh shall lift up thy head and restore thee to thy place, and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand in the same manner as at first, when thou wast his butler." But how could Joseph know that the three branches signified three days, rather than three weeks, or three months, or three years? Some say, because the butler told him this dream three days before the anniversary of* Pharaoh's birth-day, and it was customary for the kings of Egypt to pardon prisoners on their birth-day. Others say, that Joseph explained it to mean three days, because the grapes grew and ripened so fast. But these are very idle guesses. Joseph could not know, that the three branches signified *time*, if God had not taught him. When dreams are from God, as these were, the knowledge to interpret them is the gift of God. But if the dreams do not come from God, they have no meaning in themselves, and of course, cannot have any interpretation. Joseph, however, felt persuaded, that the dream of the butler was

* The ancient Egyptians represented the year, by a serpent, in the form of a circle, holding its tail in its mouth. It is quite natural to connect in idea, the year with a ring or circle, because the year like a ring, by revolving, returns, as it were, into itself. For where one year ends, there another begins, and where that other ends a third begins, and so on. Hence, in familiar language we often speak of one's *birth-day* in the sense of the *anniversary* of his birth-day ;—also of *revolving* years.

Wine usedamong the Egyptians.

from God, and that God had inspired him to know the meaning of it, and he spoke with great confidence.

I will stop a little longer to mention another matter. The butler in his dream thought that he took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup. Some of you may think the butler meant to say that he put as many grapes into the cup as he could; but that is not the meaning. He meant that he took the grapes and crushed and squeezed or pressed out the juice into the cup, and gave the juice to Pharaoh to drink. As the butler would be likely to dream of things he had been accustomed to do, some people think that Pharaoh used to drink the unfermented juice of the grape, either undiluted or mixed with water; forming a kind of grape-sherbet, such as is still used in the East. But if he did sometimes take drink of this kind, we cannot infer that wine was not made in Egypt at that time, or that the kings never drank wine. We know the fact was not so, from very ancient historians; and modern travelers have found sculptured ornaments, representing vine branches and ripe fruit on some very ancient buildings in Egypt. They have found, too, in caverns used for burial near Bein-Hassan and El Kab or Eilethia, and also on the pyramids, (some of which it is supposed were

Antiquity of the

Egyptian Pyramids.

built before Joseph's time,)* representations of the various processes of the vintage, the making and storing of wine, and of the effects of wine on those who drink too much of it. The Bible informs us that Noah made wine, (Gen. ix. 20, 21,) soon after the flood. I do not know that any kind of drink has been known longer than wine, except water and milk. The very first time we read of wine, we read of its bad effects, (Gen. ix. 20, 21;) and some excuse Noah, who was a good man, by supposing he had never tasted wine before, or if he had, that the wine made before the flood, had no such intoxicating effect. For my part, I do not believe any body can possibly know any thing about

*The pyramids of Egypt are some of the most ancient structures on our earth. They descend from an unknown antiquity. Herodotus, who wrote 2000 years ago and more, speaks with as much uncertainty about the time when they were constructed, as we do at present. They are generally supposed to have been designed, as places of burial for the Egyptian kings. Thompson speaks of them thus :

“Instead of useful works, like Nature's—great,
Enormous, cruel, wonders crushed the land;
And round a tyrant's tomb, who none deserved,
For one vile carcase, perished countless lives.”

Others, however, contend that they were constructed in honor of the Deity. They have always been ranked among the wonders of the world. A scientific Frenchman, who traveled in England, not many years ago, said that “the great pyramid of Egypt required for its erection the labors of 100,000 men for twenty years; but if it were required to raise the stones from their quarries and place them at their present height, the action of the steam-engines of England, which are managed by 36,000 men, would be sufficient to produce the effect in eighteen hours; and if it were necessary to cut the stones and move them from their quarries to the pyramids, a very few days would be sufficient.”

Joseph interprets the

chief-baker's dream.

those matters. But I would advise you never to get into the habit of drinking wine, or any thing else, that can intoxicate you.* Water is much better for health and happiness than wine; although, when people are infirm or sick, it is sometimes very proper and very necessary to take it, as medicine. Now we will pass from the dream of the butler to the dream of the baker.

When the chief baker heard Joseph interpret the butler's dream to signify something good, he told his dream. He said he dreamed he had three "baskets on his head, and the uppermost was filled with pastry and all sorts of food for Pharaoh; and the birds were eating out of the basket on his head."

*One of the most celebrated of the English poets, has these lines:

"As in my youth, I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood,
Therefore my age is, as a lusty winter
Frosty but kindly."

The celebrated Bishop Berkley used to call the few, who had drunk spirituous liquors with impunity for a series of years—*The Devil's Decoys*. The art of distilling spirits is much less ancient, than the art of making wine. The art of distilling was first brought into Europe by the Moors of Spain, about the year 1150. They learned it from the African Moors, who had it from the Egyptians, and these are said to have practiced it, during the reign of the Emperor Dioclesian, (A. D. 284 to 304,) although it was unknown to the ancient Greeks and Romans. The habitual use of distilled liquor, as a beverage, has done much evil in many ways; whereas "honest water," says the same poet, "is too weak to be a sinner: it ne'er left man i' th' mire;" but "strong drink," says Solomon, "is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. xx. 1.) We must not suppose, however, that the "strong drink" spoken of by Solomon, was distilled liquor, for the reason just mentioned.

Joseph's interpretationfulfilled

Joseph then said, "This is the interpretation—The three baskets are three days; within three days, shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall have thee hung on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee."

If Joseph had not been quite certain, that God had taught him the true meaning of this dream, he would not have given such a fearful interpretation of it: for Joseph was a pious young man, and could have no pleasure in giving the chief-baker so much distress, as this interpretation must have caused him. No good man, or good boy will trifle with the feelings of another, or take any pleasure in giving pain even to an insect, much less to a fellow man. Besides, if his interpretation had not been fulfilled, his situation with these two high officers afterward, would have been very uncomfortable. They would have regarded him as a false pretender, or as a cruel trifler with their feelings, and they might have found many means to vex and trouble him.

But the thing I wish you to observe particularly is, the order, in which these two men told their dreams; and that Joseph interpreted the dream of the butler, before he knew the dream of the baker. It shows how, great events may often depend on very small things. The butler told his dream first, which signified something good for him; and this

God often actsthrough human means.

encouraged the baker to tell his dream, which signified something bad for him. Now, if the baker had told his dream first, and Joseph had interpreted it, before the butler told his, it would very probably have made the butler afraid to tell his dream, which was very much like the baker's in the main; and if the butler had never told his dream to Joseph, it might have happened, that the butler never would have mentioned Joseph to Pharaoh, and then Pharaoh would not have sent for Joseph, as we shall find he did, to interpret his dreams. It is true, that when God determines to bring an event to pass, he is never at a loss to find means to do it. But then we must remember, that God often accomplishes things through human actions, and he does this in such a way as not to force men to do any thing against their will. The whole history of Joseph is a striking example of God's wonderful way of doing things. You remember Joseph's dream, and the interpretation which his father put upon it. It signified that Joseph should be greatly exalted above his brethren, and above his father in worldly grandeur. But the way which God took to bring Joseph's dream to pass, seemed to lead in the opposite direction: for the first step in the accomplishment of it, was to let his older brethren sell him to the Ishmaelites; the next, to let the Ishmaelites carry him into Egypt and sell him, as

God's watchful carecontinually around us.

a slave, to Potiphar; the next, to let Potiphar put him into prison; the next, to give him favor with the keeper of the prison; the next, to let Pharaoh put two of his officers into the same prison; the next, to cause these two officers to dream dreams in the same night, which were in most respects very much alike: The next was to give Joseph wisdom to interpret their dreams, and so order it, that the butler should tell his dream first. You will find by and by that the butler informed Pharaoh of Joseph's wisdom, and this was the means, God employed, to bring Joseph out of his prison, and procure for him the highest place of honor under Pharaoh. The Bible speaks of God, as wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. (Isa. xxviii. 29.) We ought to remember that God's Providence is continually around us, and things that seem to us to be things of course, or very trifling or accidental, are often made use of by him, to bring about very great events. (See Mark xiv. 12, 17.) God watched over Joseph and took care of him, when he was a little boy, as well as when he was a man; and God takes care of you as truly as he did of Joseph. You ought to be thankful to God, at all times, for the care he takes of you, and for the good things he provides for you: for all the good things you receive really come from him. But there is something else I wish you to notice.

You may think this dream of the baker a very strange one ; because it represents him as carrying three baskets on his head, one on top of another ; and the birds as flying near enough to him, to eat out of the basket. You have seen persons carrying things on their heads, through our streets, and sometimes, things of considerable weight. But I do not think these baskets were very heavy. The words Moses uses, may signify wicker baskets, (Isa. xix. 9,) and wicker baskets you know are not heavy. The Egyptians in these times, knew how to make such baskets.* You remember that, when Moses was born, his mother put him into an ark of bulrushes, and laid him in the sedges by the river bank. This ark was nothing but a basket daubed with slime and pitch. The Egyptians, in those early times, had invented a great many curious arts, and could do some things, we should find it very difficult to do now. But we should think it very singular, if we were to see

* The ancient Britons (supposed by some to have come from Phoenicia) were celebrated for their skill in making baskets ; and many were carried from Britain to Rome. The Roman poet Juvenal, mentions them among the extravagant and expensive furniture of the Roman tables in his time. The Roman poet Martial also speaks of them. Our word *basket*, is pretty much the same as that used more than 1700 years ago by the ancient Britons, viz., *basked* or *basgawd*. These poets lived a great while after Joseph's time—as much as 1700 years. The business of a basket-maker, requires but a small capital of money, and not much ingenuity ; in consequence of which, it has been fixed upon as one of the most proper occupations for the indigent blind.

The kind of punishment usedin those days.

birds flying down as low as our heads, and eating things that people were carrying in that way. Yet such things may happen in Egypt and other eastern countries. In those places are to be found a great many kites, which greatly infest the cities, and are much more bold than our birds are. Stories are told of their seizing and carrying off meat even from the heads of men, when carried through the open air. And it is very probable that both the butler and baker dreamed about things that they were accustomed to see.

I wish you to notice another thing, and that is, the kind of punishments which were common in those days, and the manner in which men were sometimes condemned. Pharaoh put the butler and baker into prison, because he was angry with them. Perhaps they had done something very wrong, which deserved to be punished. But it does not appear that they had been condemned by a judge, before they were put in prison; nor that they were brought before a judge afterward. Nor does it appear that they were to be kept in prison any certain time, and then let out; but they were kept there until the return of the king's birth-day, and then as Joseph told the butler beforehand, he was restored to his liberty on that day. We should think this a very tyrannical way to treat men. We are in a much better condition. Nobody in

The manner in which thepunishment was decreed.

this country has any power to act in this way, and we ought to be very thankful to God for giving us our birth in this happy country. Besides, the way in which punishment was decreed against the baker, was very unfeeling and even barbarous. The king decreed it, at a feast he made on his birth-day, and perhaps as a part of the sport or rejoicing on that occasion. The custom of doing such things, on such occasions, continued very long; for Herod ordered that John the Baptist should be put to death on the like occasion, (Matt. xiv. 3, 10,) though he was sorry to do it.

The punishment was inflicted also on the baker in a very barbarous way. He ordered that he should be beheaded: for that is the meaning of the words "he shall lift up thy head from off thee," and after that, his body was to be suspended from a gallows tree, to be wasted by the elements, or torn and devoured by birds of prey. This is a very early example of savage cruelty, and of the custom of leaving the bodies of executed criminals to be devoured by birds. This practice also was continued a very long time; even in Europe, it existed not very long ago, among several nations, whom we consider civilized. But God forbade the practice in Moses' time, as we find by Deuteronomy. (Chap. xxi. 22, 23.) The words are, "If a man have committed a sin worthy of death,

The baker's and thebutler's anxiety.

and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree,* his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt bury him the same day." So that this barbarous practice was contrary to the laws of God, in whose image man was made, as well as an insult to humanity. In our country, such barbarous proceedings would not be allowed. Now we will return to the history.

When Joseph had explained the chief butler's dream so favorably, the butler, no doubt, rejoiced very much ;—for until then, both he and the baker must have been very anxious to know, what the king would do with them. Their dreams had impressed them very much, for they looked very sad, and the dreams plainly signified that something very important to them was to happen. We may believe safely, as I think, that in ancient times, when God caused a man to dream of something that he intended to bring to pass, he made him feel sure that it had some real meaning. If you will read the history of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel, you will see how much trouble his dream, about the great image, gave him, and what tyrannical acts he resolved upon, when he found the

* This law, it may be observed, did not authorize crucifixion, and there is no example of the Jews having inflicted that punishment, which was extremely cruel. It was a Roman punishment, and inflicted by them ordinarily only on slaves, robbers, or great offenders.

Joseph's request

of the butler.

magicians and sorcerers and sooth-sayers could not tell him what his dream was, and what it signified. (Dan. chap. ii.) The butler and the baker were affected in the same way; and as I think, it was God who made them feel so. The prompt and ready way, in which Joseph explained the dreams, impressed them very much. He did not resort to any such fooleries as their own sages did, who were mere pretenders, but he told them that God only could teach them how to interpret, and he spoke right out by authority, as the true prophets of God always did: and Joseph was very sure too, as I said to you before, for he requested the butler to remember him, when he should be restored to Pharaoh's favor, and to show him kindness, and to speak to Pharaoh about him, and try to get him out of prison. He told him too, of his misfortunes to excite his pity;—how he was stolen out of “the land of the Hebrews,”* which, as we see by this place, was another name given to the land of Canaan. He told him of his innocence also; and we should think the least the butler could have done for Joseph, was not to forget him, and try to get him out of prison. Persons who have right feel-

* We may safely believe, Joseph knew, that God had covenanted to give the land to Abraham and his posterity, (Gen. xiii. 14, 18,) and therefore, he could with propriety, call it “the land of the Hebrews,”—for the earth is the Lord's, and He disposes of it among the children of men as he pleases. (Deut. xxxii, 8: Acts xvii. 26.)

Joseph

straightened.

ings, will be grateful to those who do them good, or relieve them, when they are in trouble ; but we shall soon see that the butler forgot Joseph a long time, and never thought of executing Joseph's request.

Now I wish you to observe, how much Joseph was straightened in his imprisonment, in some things, while he was allowed great liberty in others, by the favor of the keeper. Joseph had no way to get out of prison, but by authority of the king ; and yet, he could not send his complaint to him, except in some extraordinary way. Yet God took care to provide a way by means of the dream of the chief butler ; and when God's time came for taking Joseph out of the prison, he made the butler remember Joseph, and as some think, made him feel too, that he had done Joseph wrong, in not remembering him before. This shows us again, that flourishing and rich and powerful as Egypt was, at that time, and greatly as the people were advanced in the knowledge and practice of many curious arts, they had no good laws, such as we have ; but, as I told you before, you need not wonder at that, because they had lost the knowledge of the true God, and of his will. If every nation now existing had the Bible, and all the people of every nation understood it, and loved it, I do not believe there would be such bad laws anywhere, as we know actually exist in many countries even now.

CHAPTER VI.

The butler's

ingratitude.

THREE days after this time, the dreams were fulfilled according to Joseph's interpretation; and perhaps Joseph hoped that he should soon be free again, through the influence of the chief butler. This officer must have seen Pharaoh almost every day, perhaps two or three times a day, in the way of his duty. He must have had many opportunities of serving Joseph. If the butler had spoken of him to the king, it may be, he would not have believed that Joseph was innocent, or if he had, perhaps he would not have cared any thing about him. But that would be no excuse for the butler; especially if he promised to use his influence for Joseph. It was very bad to be ungrateful, but to be ungrateful and break one's promise is still worse. You should always be careful not to promise too much,—especially to promise nothing that you cannot perform, nor any thing it would be wrong for you to perform, nor any thing which, in the event, may interfere with your duty. But when you have once made a promise right in itself, you should not only remember it, but perform it.* The cup-bearer

* It sometimes happens, indeed, that a promise which is lawful

Ingratitude of the butler

to Joseph.

ought first of all to have remembered Joseph's request, and the reason he gave for making it. He had good reason to know, that Joseph was a noble and virtuous young man; and to believe, that he had been unjustly put into prison. Joseph did not, indeed, accuse his brethren or the Arabs, or Potiphar's wife, of doing any thing wrong, or even mention their names, so far as we know; and this shows how amiable his character was; but he told the butler, that he had done nothing wrong that they should put him into prison, and the butler knew, by his own experience, how sad a thing it was, to be in prison. He ought therefore, constantly to have thought of Joseph, and let no opportunity pass of doing him a service. Then he would have shown his gratitude, which is an excellent virtue, and very pleasing to God. But the butler did not act nobly, and we ought not to be like him. First of all, you ought to be grateful to God, who gives you all the good things you enjoy—then to your parents, who watched over you when you were helpless, and to your other

when made, becomes unlawful afterward: thus Herod's promise to his daughter-in-law, (Matt. xiv. 7; Mark xiii. 23, 24,) was not unlawful in the terms in which it was made, although it was very unwise; but it became unlawful, by the daughter's demanding "John the Baptist's head." Herod was discharged therefore, from the obligation of his promise. In fact, by performing it he committed a murder. Duty should always be performed, although at the expense of a rash promise.

The patienceof Joseph.

friends. You ought to be grateful to those who have placed you in this college,—to your teachers also and those who now have the care of you and take so much pains to instruct you in useful learning, and train you to habits of industry and virtue.

When Joseph found, that the butler did not get him out of prison, you may think he began to be impatient; but I fear, if you were in like circumstances, you would be more impatient than, we have any reason to believe, Joseph was; and I am afraid no one of us, would have held out as long as Joseph did, after the butler was restored to his office. Some learned men think it was two whole years before the butler thought any thing about Joseph. I am not quite sure whether this was the time, but we know the butler did not remember him, until Pharaoh had an extraordinary dream which no one could be found to interpret.

The Bible says that after two years Pharaoh had a dream, but it does not inform us, from what time these two years are to be reckoned; whether from the time when Joseph was imprisoned, or from the time when the chief butler was set at liberty. Most persons think, they are to be reckoned from the time the chief butler was set at liberty, and I think this was probably the fact. It does not make much difference; because we do know that Joseph was

The wise men of Egypt

could not interpret Pharaoh's dream.

Potiphar's slave about thirteen years; that is, from the time he was seventeen years old, until he was thirty, and during the latter part of this time, and for two years or more, he was shut up in prison.

When these thirteen years of slavery and imprisonment had gone by, Pharaoh had a dream, or rather two dreams in one night, and he awoke between them. His mind was very much impressed by them in the morning. The words of Moses are very expressive. They mean as much as if he had said, his mind rung within him, as a bell does, when struck by the tongue or clapper. Accordingly he sent for all the diviners and wise men in Egypt and told them his dreams; but they could not interpret them. Still Pharaoh knew that his dreams were very uncommon, and that they signified something very extraordinary. He must have been greatly perplexed, when he found that the diviners or wise men, as he thought them to be, could not explain them.*

You should know, that among the ancient nations, there was a class of men, who pretended,

*Dr. Lightfoot observes, "that the term 'wise men,' or magicians in Scripture, is always used in a bad sense, as denoting sorcerers." The wise men mentioned in Matt. ii. 1, appear, however, to have been of a different character, and Bishop Horsley says, in reference to this passage, that a *magus*—the word translated *wise man*—in the old sense of the word, had nothing in common with the imposters that are now called *magicians*. The magi, he adds, were wise men, who applied themselves to the study of nature and religion.

 Interpretations belong

to God

they were able to foretell things and explain dreams sometimes by looking at the stars. Sometimes they pretended to do it, by looking into a cup or in some other way.

The Chaldeans were the most famous for this imposture, but there were such persons among the Assyrians and the Egyptians. You will find these persons mentioned in several places in the Bible—(in the 7th, 8th and 9th chapters of Exodus; in the 2d, 4th and 5th of Daniel; in Deut. xviii. 14; Josh. xiii. 22; 1 Sam. vi. 2, and in other places.) I need not tell you that these persons really could not do what they professed to do: They knew no more about future things than the soothsayers and fortune-tellers* of our days, who deceive ignorant people, and get their money in a shameful way. Joseph told the chief-butler and the baker, what was true then, as well as now. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar the same thing, (ii. 27, 28,) namely, that interpretations belong to God; and the reason why it is so, is very plain: God's providence extends to all times and all places and to every thing, and nothing can come to pass without his knowledge and permission. No person can know before-

* Sooth (in Saxon *suth*) signifies *truth*. Forsooth means *for truth* or *in truth*, though now commonly used ironically. To sooth-say is to tell the truth, beforehand or to foretell. But as this faculty, was generally assumed by quacks or impostors, the name soothsayer, has fallen into such disrepute as to be associated with fortune-tellers and gipsies.

Ignorance of

Pharaoh's wise men.

hand what God intends to permit or to bring to pass, but those whom God himself teaches. If a man has a dream which foreshows any thing, then God inspires the dream; and none can explain it but those to whom he teaches the meaning of it. If a dream does not come from God, it has no meaning at all, and those who pretend to find a meaning in it, are deceivers.

Now it is remarkable that these wise men, for whom Pharaoh sent, either confessed they could not explain it, or if not, they were unable to satisfy Pharaoh of their ability to do so. It is not very probable, that they honestly owned their ignorance; for impostors, and all false pretenders, are generally very impudent; and we find, at a later time, when Moses was sent to another Pharaoh and performed wonderful miracles, that Pharaoh also, sent for his magicians and wise men and sorcerers, and they pretended to imitate the miracles which Moses performed, and they did succeed so far, as to deceive Pharaoh, who did not wish to believe Moses.* But it was a very different matter to find out the sense of these dreams.

* Moses, however, says nothing about the origin or the nature of the acts which these magicians performed; but simply relates them, as a historian. Perhaps those magicians were like the jugglers or enchanters of the present day in Egypt, who perform some very wonderful things. But however we may regard such persons and their art, God permitted them to do what they did, in order to confound them, and to make manifest his own glory

Surmises of theJewish doctors.

The Jewish doctors say, the Egyptian diviners made several attempts to explain them, and that finally they agreed upon the explanation that Pharaoh's seven daughters would all die, and that afterward, he would have seven other daughters: but I do not know how these Jewish doctors found out that Pharaoh had seven daughters, or even any daughter, and I suspect that this explanation itself, is nothing better than an idle dream. The truth is, we do not certainly know, whether the diviners attempted to explain them or not, but if they did, we know that Pharaoh was not satisfied with their explanation; and we should not wonder at this; for it was God's purpose, at that very time, to deliver Joseph out of his long imprisonment, and to exalt him to honor by the order of Pharaoh himself and therefore, he ordered things in such a way, as to accomplish this purpose. God's wisdom is very great and his ways are very wonderful. He did not make Pharaoh do any thing against his will, nor did he make the doors of the prison fly open, by a miracle, as he might have done, and as he afterward did for the apostle Peter; nor did he send an angel to bring Joseph out and take him to Pharaoh; nor did he even make Pharaoh dream of Joseph, but he made the butler think of him, which might happen very naturally; and then the butler would very naturally tell Pharaoh about the won-

The butlerremembers Joseph.

derful knowledge of Joseph, and how remarkably and truly he had explained his dream and the baker's, as I will now show you.

When the butler saw that none of the diviners could interpret the dream, he said to Pharaoh, "My transgressions I call to mind this day." I suppose he meant the offense he had committed against Pharaoh, and not his ingratitude to Joseph. It is not probable he would have mentioned Joseph now, unless he had thought it would be likely to serve his own interests, by giving Pharaoh, the information he so much wanted. We are justified in thinking evil of the butler, by his shameful neglect of Joseph, who had relieved him of great anxiety, when he thought himself in great danger. The butler meant to say, he knew a man who could explain his dreams, and he would tell the king who he was; although he could not do that, without mentioning the offense, for which he had been put into prison. He said, that when Pharaoh was wroth with his servants,—meaning himself and the baker—and put them into prison, they both dreamed in one night, and there was a Hebrew youth with them, who was a servant of the captain of the guards, and he interpreted their dreams truly, as they came to pass.

Now observe how the butler spoke of Joseph. He did not call him by his name, though he must

Pharaoh

sends for Joseph.

have known it. He called him a youth, as if he had not much understanding—a Hebrew, or a foreigner, and of course, of a different religion; and a servant, that is, a slave of Potiphar, for he was the captain of the guards. The butler did not tell Pharaoh any thing that Joseph had told him about his innocence; and this shows very plainly, that the butler had no desire to serve Joseph. But no matter for that: Pharaoh was so anxious to know the meaning of his dreams, that he did not care who Joseph was, or what his name was, or what his condition was, if he could only explain his dreams. So he sent for him, and had him brought out of the prison in haste.

But Joseph did not go just as he was, when Pharaoh's messenger came for him. Joseph was now thirty years old—his hair and beard had grown, and his prison clothes were not suitable for him to wear, in the king's presence. Joseph, therefore, shaved himself, and changed his clothes. With the Egyptians, it was not the custom to let the beard and the hair grow long, unless they were in mourning.* This was directly opposite to the custom of most of the nations of the east. The Jews thought it a great disgrace to be bald, or to have the

* The second book of the history of Herodotus, contains many interesting and instructive particulars concerning the Egyptians, their manners, customs, &c.

Joseph goes

to the king.

hair of their heads or their beards shaved off, as you may learn from Isa. xv. 2 ; Jer. xvi. 6 ; Amos viii. 10. But it was very proper for Joseph to conform to the custom of the Egyptians on this occasion.

Having made himself ready, Joseph went to the king, without fear or shame. No one has occasion to be afraid or ashamed, if he has done nothing wrong ; but, no doubt, Joseph silently prayed to God in his heart to help him, and order every thing for the best. Pharaoh then told Joseph that he had dreamed a dream, and there was no interpreter of it ; but he had heard it said of him, that he understood a dream to interpret it.—Pharaoh evidently believed in the art of interpreting dreams, and perhaps thought it was an art that could be acquired by skill and study. But Joseph set him right on the subject:—He said:—"Not I,"—if any one has told the king that I have skill of my own to interpret a dream, it is quite a mistake—I have no such skill ; "but God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." How could Joseph know that God would give Pharaoh an answer *of peace*, before he knew what the dreams were ? Some persons think that God had already revealed the dreams to Joseph, or had assured him that he would give a favorable answer, and that is the way they suppose Joseph knew this.

However this may be, Joseph acted nobly and

Pharaoh relates

his dreams.

piously, in acknowledging his own inability. He was unwilling to encourage Pharaoh's delusion about magical skill in dreams. He acknowledged himself to be only an instrument in the hand of his God, whom he confessed before Pharaoh, and probably called by the name, by which he had been accustomed to speak of the true God. This name must have sounded very strangely in the ears of Pharaoh, who was an idolater, and knew nothing about the true God. Pharaoh then related to Joseph his two wonderful dreams. He said, "In my dream, behold I was standing on the bank of the river, and lo! from the river, there came up seven kine" or cows, for kine is the old plural of cow, "fat in flesh and goodly in form, which fed in the reed grass. And behold! seven other kine came up after them, poor, very bad in form and lean in flesh. I have not seen so bad in form, in the whole land of Egypt. The poor and lean kine devoured the first seven fat kine; yet it could not be known, their appearance being as bad as at the beginning. I then awoke."

People commonly dream of something they are accustomed to see or to do, and Pharaoh had probably often seen oxen and cows coming up out of the river Nile. Many cattle were raised in Egypt, and the Egyptian breed was very famous among the ancients. Besides, all animals of the buffalo kind,

The animals

of Egypt.

(as the ox is) in hot countries, delight to stand in the water so deep, as to cover every part of the body except the head, and this kind of animals will also swim broad and rapid rivers, without reluctance or difficulty. There were a great many other kinds of animals in Egypt besides oxen—there were buffaloes, horses, apes, camels and large sheep, besides a great many wild and ferocious animals.*

* Several species of animals are included under the name, camel, of which the dromedary, having a single bunch or protuberance on its back, is the common camel. This is a natural inhabitant of the burning deserts of Arabia; where it has been domesticated from time immemorial, and from thence diffused over the rest of Asia and Africa. In general the height of this camel measured from the top of the dorsal bunch to the ground, is six feet and a half; but he can elevate his head nine feet. The Bactrian, or Turkish camel, is distinguished from the dromedary, by having two bunches on his back. This species is found in Tartary, Persia, Turkey, and China. This species and the dromedary only, are generally known by the name of camel. But the lama is reckoned a species of camel, and is sometimes called the Peruvian camel. It is scarcely four feet and a half high, and not more than six feet in length. Notwithstanding his diminutive size, he bears considerable resemblance to the dromedary. The Peruvians used the lama, not only to bear burdens, but to yoke him to the plough, before the arrival of the Spaniards. The wool of the lama is valuable. There are four other kinds of animals found in South America which some naturalists reckon as species of the camel. The animals peculiar to Egypt were the hippopotamus, or river horse,—an immense animal—twelve or thirteen feet long, and as many round the body, having thick short legs. It is found in Upper Egypt and Ethiopia, and descends the river, making great destruction in the fields along the banks of the river; Also the *crocodile* formerly found in all the waters of the Nile; the *ichneumon*, a species of rat which devours the eggs of the *crocodile*, and is useful in preventing the multiplication of that animal; the *cynocephalus*, a species of monkey. Among the birds is the *ibis*—a very beautiful bird—which was celebrated in Egypt, because it devoured the serpents which were hatched after the Nile retired within its banks. There is also a species of large falcon, the color of which is brown. It has very beautiful and brilliant eyes. It is not a bird of prey, and is often seen among pigeons, and lives peaceably with them.

Pharaoh's dream.

The east wind.

Then Pharaoh related the other dream. "I saw in my dream, seven ears came up, on one stalk rank and good, and behold seven ears, sapless, thin, and parched by the east wind, sprung up after them. The thin ears then swallowed up the goodly ears."

I told you just now, that Egypt was famous for cattle in ancient times. I must now tell you, that many persons think Egypt was the original land of wheat; though others think, that wheat was first found in Sicily, or Siberia, or Persia; and these places were once very famous for wheat. But the first time we hear of wheat, is in Egypt; and it is very probable, wheat was carried from thence to the islands in the Mediterranean Sea, afterward to Greece and the countries settled from Greece. It may seem strange to you that wheat or any kind of grain should be scorched by a wind. One would think that it would require the heat of a furnace to scorch any thing growing; but travelers in the East, inform us, that the east wind is very keen and violent, and dry, and parches up all vegetation in its way.* In coming to Palestine, the wind

* There is a wind called *Khamsin* in Egypt, but in other countries, the *Samiel*, *Simoon*, or *Sirocco*, which is very destructive. It blows, in Egypt, two or three days in succession, and its appearance is accompanied with the most extraordinary phenomena. The air becomes heavy—the atmosphere suffocating. The sun becomes yellowish, and gives less light than the full moon ordinarily gives. Whirlwinds, thick with dust, obscure the air still more, and intercept the little light the sun would otherwise yield. Men and brute animals breathe with difficulty. The plants wither, and

The south wind in

Egypt destroys vegetation.

crosses the deserts of Arabia. In the Scriptures any wind which is remarkably destructive, is called, east wind, (Ex. xiv. 21; Ps. xlvii. 8; Job xxvii. 21,) but in Egypt it is the south wind, that is so destructive. Niebuhr, a famous traveler, says that in Egypt, the south wind, can in a moment change the most flourishing vegetation into parched herbage. Moses here calls the wind *Kadim* (which usually signifies east wind,) not because this wind in Egypt came from the east, (for it came only from the south,) but because it was very destructive.*

These then, were the dreams of Pharaoh. As soon as Joseph heard them, he told the king, that they came from God; and that God took that way to inform him, what he was about very soon to do. Now Joseph could not have known this, if God had not informed him. Then he told Pharaoh, that both dreams meant the same thing, and the

nature itself seems to sink. At such times, the inhabitants of the towns shut themselves within their houses. Those in the deserts, hide themselves in their tents or in fosses dug in the earth, and there they wait, until this terrible tempest has past. An author, who has given particular attention to this wind, says "that when it blows, it spreads in the atmosphere a yellowish and sometimes a somewhat livid hue." During its most violent periods, the sun appears deep red. Its odor is infectious and sulphureous. It is thick and heavy, and when the heat of it increases, it is almost suffocating. Perhaps the *Kadim* of which Moses, or rather Pharaoh, here spoke, was this wind, now called *Khamsin* by the Arabs.

* Those who translated the Bible into the Arabic language, rendered this word, by words in that language, which signify *south* or *southern wind*.

reason why the dream was repeated was, that God had determined he certainly would bring it to pass very soon. It was necessary that Pharaoh should know this, because if he did not, he might not begin to make timely use of the warning, which God mercifully gave him, in this way. The seven good-looking kine, he said, denoted seven years, and the seven good ears, denoted the same seven years. And the seven lean kine, that came up out of the river after the others, and the seven thin and parched ears of corn denoted seven other years. The good kine and the good ears denoted seven years of great abundance in the whole land of Egypt;—and the ill-looking kine, and the parched ears denoted seven years of famine, that would consume the land and be so great, that the years of abundance would be forgotten and not be perceived in the land.

The river, Pharaoh spoke of, was the Nile which, as some learned men say, the Egyptians also called *Jaro*. They say that Moses employed that word in this place because it was the word the Egyptians used. They inform us also, that this word signifies river,* and that the name *Nile*, is not the name the

* Some persons think, that the name Jordan comes in part from this word *Jaro*; and that it means *river of Dan*, or of judgment, because *Dan* signifies judgment, or this river may be called (*Jaro-Dan*,) or *Jor-dan*, because it flows from the city of Dan in the north of Palestine.

The sources of

the Nile.

Egyptians applied to it, but a name given to it by the Greeks. However this may be, the river as I have told you, is a very large one. It is said to be a thousand yards wide at Cairo, which was not very far from the city of On, where it is supposed Pharaoh lived. Now we will look again at this river on the map. George, will you describe it?*

George. It runs from the south toward the north, and flows into the Mediterranean Sea, by several branches. I do not know where it rises.

It is remarkable that no traveler has accurately found out the sources of this river. The truth is, it has several sources, and the river is formed by the union of several considerable streams in Abyssinia and Nubia. The ancients said it rose in the mountains of the Moon, called by the Arabs *Dgebel el Kamar*, and the river called *Bahr el Abjadh* (white river,) which rises in these mountains, is one of the sources of the Nile. But there is one remarkable thing about this river, that has always been

* The Nile, from its entrance into Egypt—from Syene to within about 70 miles of its mouth, near the city Cercasora, flows in an undivided channel from south to north in a vast monotonous plain or valley; enclosed on the west, by sandy deserts,—on the east by mountains of granite, and is from ten to sixteen miles in breadth. Here and there you see clumps of palm trees, and gigantic ruins in the neighborhood of miserable villages. At Cercasora, the river divides into two principal arms, of which the eastern discharges itself into the Mediterranean Sea, at the city of Pelusium, and the western at Canopus. From each of these arms, others branch off. Herodotus counted seven mouths of the Nile in his time.

Annual overflowof the Nile.

known by those who have known any thing about Egypt. Can you tell me, what that is Benjamin?

Benjamin. I suppose, sir, you refer to the rising and falling of its waters, every year.

Yes : I alluded to this before, but did not say much about the matter. It begins to rise every year, about the end of the month of June, and rises about four inches a day, until near the end of September, and then the waters begin to fall, and continue falling about as long. At this rate, the river would rise in three months, thirty feet or more. Herodotus, an ancient historian, who was born 404 years before Christ, relates that a rise of sixteen cubits was high enough to water the country ; but most travelers say, the river rises usually about twenty-two cubits. Do you know what a cubit is, Samuel?

Samuel. It is a measure of length, about a foot and-a-half.

That is an English cubit. But Dr. Arbuthnot has estimated the Roman cubit at seventeen inches and two-fifths ; and the cubit of the Scriptures at a little less than twenty-two inches.* The word

* Mr. Greaves, who traveled in Greece, Palestine and Egypt, to ascertain the weights, monies, and measures of antiquity, found by comparing the actual measurement of the pyramids of Egypt, with the accounts which Herodotus, Strabo, and others give of their size, that the ancient cubit contained nearly twenty-two inches, English measure. Herodotus says, the king's cubit in Babylon, was three fingers larger than the usual one.

 Overflowing

 of the Nile.

really means the length of a man's arm from the elbow to the end of his middle finger, and of course, as a measure, would vary with the stature of the man whose arm is used for a measure. It is very natural for us to take measures from parts of our bodies, such as the finger, palm, hand, or arm.* We commonly take this kind of measure from the foot. It is said of one of the kings of England, that he had the length of his foot taken, as the royal standard measure of a foot in length. We will not say any thing more about this: only I wish you particularly to remember the length of a cubit in Scripture,† as that measure is often mentioned. (Gen. vi. 15; vii. 20; Exod. xxviii. 10; 1 Sam. xvii. 4; 1 Kings vi. 2, 23; Ezek. xl. 23; Dan. iii. 1; John xxi. 8; Rev. xxi. 17.)

This annual overflowing of the Nile, as I told you, was the chief cause of the great fertility of the country along its banks, and Pharaoh knew that. Then again, you must know, that the Egyptians considered the heifer sacred, and they made that animal a symbol or sign to signify the Nile, on account of its enriching effects on the land. We see

* Thus the word *ell*, which is now used only to denominate a measure of length, in old English signifies *arm*. In the compound word *elbow*, it still has that meaning. Elbow is the bow or bend of the arm; and a chair with two branches or arms on which the elbows may rest, is called an *elbow-chair* or arm-chair.

† The Hebrews are said to have had another cubit of gigantic size; six times the length of the ordinary cubit of twenty-two inches. The sacred cubit was twenty-four inches, or thereabouts.

Pharaoh alarmed

by his dreams.

then, a reason why Pharaoh should have been so much struck with his dream, in which he seemed to see fat kine and lean kine coming up out of this river, upon which they so much depended. Perhaps he thought something was to happen to the river, both good and bad, or that some extraordinary influence was to proceed from the river. If he thought so, it would alarm him, because as I told you, they scarcely ever have any rain in Egypt, and the country therefore depends almost altogether on the river.* He might have guessed that plenty would come out of the river, and scarcity also, but he could not know how.—Would the Nile stop overflowing its banks? How could that be? And if the Nile should continue every year to overflow its banks, but yet not make the land fruitful—how could that happen? He did not know, nor could his wise men tell him what his dreams signified, nor could any body tell him, but God, or some one whom God taught to explain them. Yet now we have Joseph's interpretation

* Travelers inform us, that you can scarcely ever see, in Egypt, those grey, black and white clouds, which are so common in our climate, under a thousand fantastical forms; because the vapors raised from the Mediterranean Sea, during the summer, are borne southward by the wind, (which at this season blows almost constantly from the north,) over the whole length of Egypt, without any obstacle to arrest them, until they meet the mountains near the equator, where they are condensed into clouds and rain, and thus produce the periodical inundations of the Nile before mentioned. The season during which these rains fall, they call winter.

Pharaoh remindedof God's goodness.

of his dreams, they seem to signify plenty and famine so plainly, that we are apt to think Joseph might have guessed their true meaning ; but he told Pharaoh it was quite otherwise. Without divine teaching, Joseph could only guess, he could not know ; and the wisest man's guess is as unlike knowledge as that of any other person. There is a great difference between guessing and knowing. That you understand very well, when you are called to say your lessons ; and Pharaoh too, understood the difference ; for if he had guessed right before, he felt as much relief when he knew that he had guessed right, as if he had guessed wrong, and Joseph had set him right.

It is remarkable, that Joseph first interpreted that part of the dream which predicted famine, and then that which predicted plenty, and reminded Pharaoh of God's goodness to him in giving him such knowledge beforehand. He then gave Pharaoh his advice, which seems very presuming in a slave, just brought out of prison, especially, if we consider what a great king Pharaoh was. His kingdom was one of the mightiest and most flourishing which then existed, and perhaps as old as any other. It was very flourishing even in Abraham's time. But Joseph had no fear or shame to give his advice to so great a king ; for no doubt God put it into his mind to say what he did ; because

Joseph's

advice.

as we shall see, God had further designs to accomplish by means of this famine, and Joseph was, in truth, God's messenger to Pharaoh, and God put it into the heart of Pharaoh to receive Joseph's advice. But when Joseph gave this advice, it was impossible for him to know how Pharaoh would receive it, or what plans he would adopt. Joseph did not think of himself, or foresee how his fortune was connected with the dream, and the years of plenty and famine. His advice, therefore, was quite disinterested.

Now, I will tell you what Joseph's advice was. He said, "Let Pharaoh select a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.—Let Pharaoh do this also: let him appoint officers over the land, and take the fifth part of the land of Egypt, during the years of abundance. Let them gather all the food of the good years that come, and lay up grain under the hand of Pharaoh, as provision for the cities, and let such be saved. Let the food be for store in the land, for the seven years of famine which will be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not utterly perish through the famine."

This advice was pleasing to Pharaoh, and to his servants, and it was very wise. These servants probably were his counsellors, and assisted him in matters of government. For Pharaoh, without

Joseph appointed to ahigh office.

waiting, said to them, shall we find a man like this, in whom the spirit of God is? Probably Pharaoh wished his ministers to agree to the appointment of Joseph, because he was a foreigner, and the Egyptians did not like foreigners. (Gen. xliii. 32.) He wished them to think that Joseph's great wisdom in explaining the dream, and giving such good advice, without taking any time to think about it, proved that he would be the fittest person to manage this great business; and as no one said any thing against Pharaoh's opinion, he appointed him immediately the highest officer under himself in the kingdom. But you must not think from what Pharaoh said, that he believed in only one God, for he and all the Egyptians were idolaters, and worshiped false gods, and even brute animals. Yet Pharaoh probably thought that Joseph's God was one of the gods which might be worshiped in company with their own gods.

CHAPTER VII.

Pharaoh's

wise conduct.

PHARAOH did a very wise thing when he appointed Joseph to this high office ; and every king and president ought, when he appoints officers, to do as he did. It was no objection, that Joseph was a foreigner, and had been a slave, and put into prison by his master, because he observed that Joseph was a very wise man, and that he feared God, and was better fitted for the office than any other man he knew. Solomon said, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and of knowledge. (Prov. i. 7 ; ix. 10 ; Psa. iii. 12.) The fear of God, is the best security for a man's good behaviour in every situation. A man who fears God is always conscientious, and is afraid to do wrong, and will not do wrong knowingly and wilfully ; but you can never safely trust a man in any thing, unless he is conscientious in every thing. It would be well if all in authority over us would act upon the principle that Pharaoh did, in making this appointment.

What Pharaoh said and did to Joseph, on that occasion, is so very remarkable for many reasons, that I wish you to think of it particularly. This is what he said : " Since God hath made this known

Joseph's authority

over Egypt.

to thee, none is so wise and discreet as thou. Thou shalt be over my house, and only in the throne will I be greater than thou. My people shall be guided* by thy word." This, you see, was putting Joseph over the head of all his great officers, and over the head of his former master Potiphar, who had treated him so cruelly, and over the head of the chief butler, who was so ungrateful to him, as well as the rest. Pharaoh said further to Joseph : "Behold I have now set thee over the whole land of Egypt."

In England, the highest officer of the King or Queen is called Prime Minister, and he has not so great power as Pharaoh gave Joseph. In Turkey, the chief officer of the Sultan is called Grand Vizier. Pharaoh made Joseph very much such an officer as a Prime Minister of the King of England, or the Grand Vizier† of the Sultan; because no person in the kingdom had so much power as Joseph, except the king himself. Having said

* Some persons say, that the words of Moses signify, "and according to thy word, shall my people *kiss*;" and they explain the expression by saying, it was customary for inferior persons to testify their respect, by kissing whatever was given to them by a superior, or putting it to their foreheads. The word may signify *kiss*, or it may have a different meaning. I do not know, however, that there is sufficient evidence of the existence of such a ceremony in those early times. But the meaning of the verse plainly is, that the people should obey Joseph.

† This is an Arabic word: It signifies *a carrier*, or *bearer of a burden*. According to Chardin, it is applied to all governors and officers who have any command in any city depending upon the sovereign.

Pharaoh giveth

Joseph his ring

these words to Joseph, Pharaoh performed a ceremony which was very impressive. Pharaoh drew off the ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph's hand. He put on Joseph vestures, or garments of fine linen,* and he put a gold chain around his neck. After this, Pharaoh caused him to ride in the second chariot, which he had; and as they went through the streets, the word *Abreck* was proclaimed with a loud voice, by persons appointed by Pharaoh for that purpose. This was the ceremony:—Have you ever seen a large procession in our streets?

All. Yes, sir, a great many.

Well; then you can form some idea of the procession, which Pharaoh ordered, when he made Joseph his prime minister. But I do not suppose that procession was exactly like those you have seen. The way of doing the same things, no doubt, is very different in our country in many respects from what it was in Egypt 3500 years ago, and the object of this procession was very different from that of any procession you have ever seen.

The object of Pharaoh was to make known to

* There are different opinions as to the material of which these vestures were made. Some think it was silk; others, fine flax; others, cotton. It is probable the word used by Moses signifies cotton. Pliny informs us, that robes of cotton were very ancient in Egypt, and were worn by persons of the greatest eminence. In Scripture, *white robes* denote *honor* and *acceptance*. (Compare Gen. xli. 42; xlv. 22; Esth. vi. 8, 9; Isaiah iii. 7; Zech. iii. 5; Rev. vi. 11.)

Joseph, Pharaoh's

chief minister.

the people, by this pomp and ceremony, that Joseph was his first minister. It was for that reason, he had splendid clothing put on Joseph, and had him carried through the streets in his second chariot; so that the people could see him and know how much authority Joseph had. At the present time, I suppose a king would not make such a procession for such a purpose, but would probably only have the appointment printed and published in a newspaper.* But printing was not known in Egypt at that time.

I suppose that Pharaoh himself rode in this procession, and that his chariot went first, and the chariot in which Joseph rode, next. You must not think the Egyptians in those early times, had no such vehicles as we have. They had a great many chariots and wagons. They had chariots of war

* The art of printing, at least in Europe, is comparatively a modern discovery. Who were the first inventors of European printing, in what city, and in what year, it was first practiced, has long been disputed. But the introduction of this art into England, is justly ascribed to William Caxton, a merchant of London, who had acquired a knowledge of it, in his travels abroad. This man was born in the year 1413, or a little earlier. The first book ever printed in the English language is dated Sept. 19, 1471, at Cologne. The title of it is, *The Recuyell of the History of Troy*. Caxton died in 1486 or 1491. The bare mention of printing, should fill us with gratitude to Divine Providence, for the communication of so valuable an art. Before the invention of printing, it was scarcely possible for any, but the rich, to obtain any part of the Scriptures; because manuscripts were very expensive. But now, by assistance of this art, every kind of knowledge, may be diffused among every class of men, at a very little expense. The art of printing has been practiced among the Chinese a very long time; but they print with wooden blocks, and not as we do.

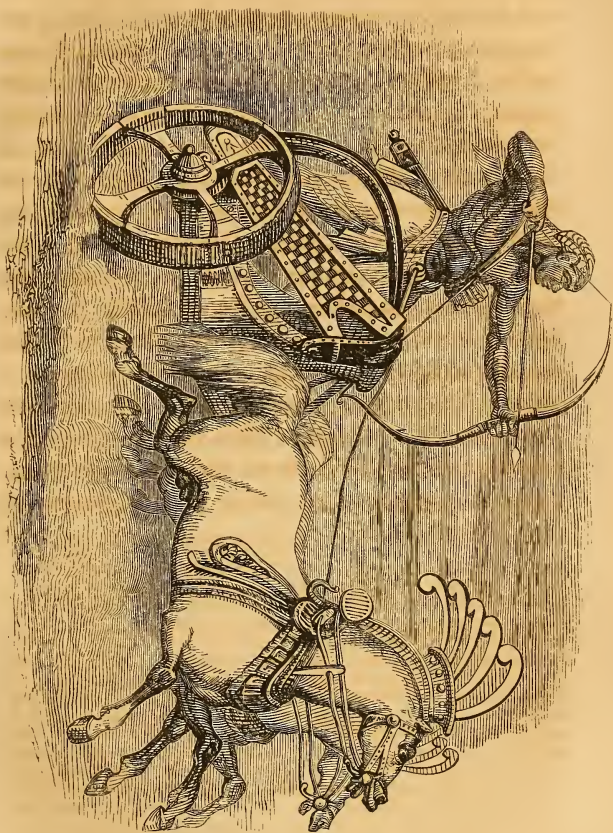
The chariots

of ancient Egypt.

and transport wagons. (Gen. xlv. 19.)* But I am not sure that they had learned to ride on horseback, so early as the times we are speaking of; for horses were trained to draw wagons and wheeled vehicles before they were trained to carry men on their backs. Travelers tell us that, at present, no carriages are seen in Egypt and very few in the eastern countries; at least, they are not in common use among the people. Learned men, who have studied the customs of the ancient Egyptians, have undertaken to describe these chariots. The chariot of State, they say, was in the form of a gig,—it was a light, open chariot, on two wheels with the sides closed. The war chariot, was pretty much like this, except the sides were open. The wheels† had six spokes, it was drawn by

* Judging by the representations which remain of it, the Egyptian chariot was compact and light, yet substantial, and the building of it, when springs were not yet thought of, must have been a peculiarly difficult art. But these chariots were very different from the vehicle which we call *a coach*. Coaches and almost all other similar vehicles now in use, it is said, were invented by the French. Under Francis I., whose reign began in A. D. 1515, there were only two coaches in France—that of the queen and that of Diana, a daughter of Henry II. The kings of France, before they used these vehicles, traveled on horseback; the princesses were carried on litters, and ladies rode on horseback behind their squires. Till about the middle of the 17th century, there were but few coaches in Paris. The introduction of coaches into England, is ascribed to Fitz Allen, earl of Arundel, in the year A. D. 1580. About the year 1605, they were in general use among the nobility and gentry in London.

† The wheel, was a very great invention; and the business of a wheel-wright is of very great importance. It contributes very much to our first necessities. On wheels, we transport an immense amount of merchandise; and we travel upon them with great com-



The procession

moved along.

oxen* instead of horses, which we should think very strange. On a journey, the chariot was furnished with a kind of umbrella, fixed on a rod, rising from the centre of the car or body. The reins for driving, were the same as those used for horses, and perhaps were furnished with a bit. Besides a driver, a groom or servant attended the chariot on foot, and on the journey fed the animals as they went along.

The Bible does not describe Pharaoh's chariot, nor tell us whether it was drawn by horses or oxen; and we can get an idea of it, only by what we know of the ancient customs of that country.

As the procession moved along, some persons proclaimed the word *Abreck*. You have heard such expressions as these "God save the king,"—"Vive le roi," "Vive la republique." *Abreck*, some learned men think, was pretty much such a kind of expression, though it signified something very different. It is sometimes translated "Bow

fort, as well as speed. Our turnpike roads and rail roads would be of little or no use if the wheel had never been invented. Modern science has improved the construction of the wheel very much and may improve it still more.

*In Bombay, and in many other parts of the East Indies, we are told, oxen are generally used instead of horses, not only for drawing carriages, but for riding; and however ridiculous such a practice may seem to us, it appears, that in this respect they are not inferior to ordinary horses; being capable of going at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour. (Encyc. Brit. art. Bombay.) In Surat there is a kind of small ox, with a fierce look, which is used for drawing children. (Cyclop. art. Bos.)

Pharaoh put a goldchain around Joseph's neck.

the knee; sometimes "Father of the king," or "Minister of the king." Perhaps we cannot now find out, with certainty, what it does mean, and some persons, who have translated the Bible, leave this word untranslated; and write it, as they read it, *Abreck*. But it is very plain that it meant something honorable to Joseph, and signified that the king had given him great power in his kingdom.

Now I have described to you the out-door ceremony, but before we proceed with the history, I must say something about the ceremony which took place immediately after Joseph had given his advice to Pharaoh in presence of his high officers. Pharaoh took the ring he wore, off from his own hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and a chain of gold around his neck. You see by this, that the Egyptians knew how to make chains and rings, and that it was the custom, at least for kings and high officers, to wear rings.

Learned men think, this ring was a signet or seal ring, which was used by the king to seal documents or writings concerning State matters; and that by delivering it to Joseph, Pharaoh meant to signify, that he gave Joseph the chief authority in the kingdom. The king of Persia gave his seal ring to his successive ministers in the same way; and in Esther viii. 8, we read of letters, written in the king's name, and sealed with his ring. This

Ceremony of

promotion.

custom, of using the ring in different ceremonies, has prevailed a very long time. Even now, the ring is used in some ceremonies. But I need not speak of them: it is enough for us at present to know, what Pharaoh meant, when he gave Joseph this signet ring. He meant to give Joseph power to act, as he should think right and best, in the king's name, and seal writings for the king: for there is no doubt that the Egyptians were acquainted with some sort of writing before Joseph's time, but it was very different from our writing.*

Now I will tell you something about the fine linen clothes which Pharaoh gave Joseph.

Do you know William, what the word *invest* signifies?

William. It means to clothe or to dress.

Yes, it means that, and you will find other mean-

* Symbolical writing was invented before alphabetical; and because the written language of the Chinese consists of symbolical characters, Sir George Staunton infers, that the Chinese must have sequestered themselves from the rest of mankind, before symbolical writing was superseded by the alphabetical character. Many learned men have supposed, that the alphabet was of Divine origin. Some have asserted, that letters were first communicated to Moses by God himself. Others, that the decalogue was the first alphabetic writing; but Sir Isaac Newton admits that letters were known in the time of Abraham. All admit that the Pentateuch is the earliest specimen of alphabetical writing at present existing in the world. Some authors ascribe the invention of the alphabet to the Egyptians, others to the Phœnicians, and others to the Chaldeans. The truth is, it does not appear to whom we are indebted for this admirable and useful invention. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield wrote a very ingenious essay on this subject, which is well worth perusing. He maintains that alphabetical writing is of Divine origin.

Manner of

investiture.

ings of the word in your dictionary, but they all have some allusion, real or fancied, to the action of putting garments or clothes on a person. We speak of *investing* a man with power, or with an office; and we speak of *clothing* a man with an office, or with authority. Now, can you see any resemblance between putting clothes on a man, and putting him into the possession of an office, or giving him authority? I suppose you do not; well, I will tell you. Some learned men say, that in ancient times, when a king or great man gave an office or authority to one of his subjects to act under him, he put fine clothing upon him, as a part of the ceremony, in order to signify, that he clothed him with (that is, gave him) the office or authority; just as Pharaoh did to Joseph on this occasion. Travelers inform us, that in the east, a dress of honor is still given by kings, when they promote any of their subjects to a high office. This ceremony would be called by us, *investiture*, or the act of investing or clothing with an office. In Europe, a ceremony of this kind was used formerly, on many occasions. But the ceremony was very much changed in some respects. Sometimes they repeated words, as Pharaoh did to Joseph; sometimes they delivered something, as a staff, a glove, a knife, a piece of a cloak, a strap, a girdle, or some keys—a standard, a banner, a cap, a sword,

Joseph's unexpectedrelease from prison.

a bow, arrows, spurs, or a turf or twig. The thing thus ceremoniously delivered, whatever it may have been, was a symbol or sign of the office, authority, or land, or whatever else was given; because those who devised the ceremony, thought it had some resemblance to it. I hope you now understand why Pharaoh gave his ring to Joseph, and clothed him in fine linen, and made him ride in the second chariot, and did the other things mentioned.

The only other thing I wish you to recollect is, how very ancient such ceremonies are; for this ceremony took place about 3,560 years ago. If we knew the customs of the ancient nations, as well as we do those of our own times, we should find, I think, that they were not so very different from ours, in a great many things, as we are apt to suppose. Many of our customs are like the customs of the ancients, because they have been handed down from one generation to another, till they have come to us. This is another kind of tradition.

Now I wish you to consider what a great and unexpected step this was for Joseph. In the morning, when he woke up, he was confined in a prison, and did not know when he should get out of it;—before night, he was the greatest man in Egypt, except the king himself. How quickly his condition was changed from the lowest to the highest but one, in that great and powerful kingdom. This

Vicissitudes

of fortune.

was brought about by the over-ruling Providence of the great God, who watched over Joseph, from the time he was born, until then. This change was what we should call very happy, and I have no doubt it was so, in the case of Joseph; because God did not forsake him, but continued still to take care of him. Changes of another sort however, very often happen. Not long ago, we read in the newspapers of a change in the fortunes of one of the greatest kings in Europe. Do you remember his name, and the country of which he was king, William?

William. Louis Philippe, king of the French.

Yes; I refer to him; and you remember that we celebrated in this college, on the 22nd of February of this year, the birth-day of our great and good Washington.

All. Yes, sir.

At that time, Louis Philippe was a king on his throne, and thought himself secure by his great power; but in two or three days, he was obliged to flee for his life, and escape from his country; and although he was one of the richest men in the world, he could carry away with him scarcely money enough to pay his expenses on the way.

This was a great change, too, but of the opposite kind, and yet not more extraordinary, if as much so, as the change in Joseph's condition. You see

The richand the poor.

then, that no man, who is rich and powerful and happy, should say, I shall always be rich and powerful and happy; and no one who is poor and unhappy should say, I shall always be poor and unhappy. That will be as God pleases. God can raise up the poor out of the dust, and lift the beggar from the dunghill, and set them among princes; and the proud and the lofty, and every one that is lifted up, he can bring low. (1 Sam. ii. 8; Isa. ii. 12.) You should never forget this; nor must you think, because you are children, that God's Providence does not extend to you. Our blessed Saviour said, "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground, without your Heavenly Father." God feeds the birds of the air, and clothes the grass of the field: and if he feeds the birds of the air, do you not think he takes care of you? (Matt. vi. 26, 30.) He does; and he will make you more happy than Joseph then was, if you love him, and put your trust in him.

There is another thing I wish you to think of: What a wonderful event it was, that a man like Joseph, who worshiped the true God, and loved and feared him, and was taught by God in so remarkable a way, should be exalted to so high an office, in an idolatrous nation; where the cow, the crocodile, and other brute animals were worshiped, as if they were God. You would think it very re-

God's

providence.

markable, if you were to hear that some pious young American had been made the Prime Minister of the Emperor of China. If in addition, you should hear that he had been taken captive, when he was but seventeen years old—carried to the interior of China—bound out to a hard master, and put into prison; and that when he was in prison, the Emperor heard of him, sent for him, and made him his Prime Minister, you would wonder still more. But such an event would not be more wonderful than the elevation of Joseph: nor would it be more difficult to be brought about by any human means. Yet it is just as easy for God to do the one as the other, and that, too, by simple and natural means, without any miracle, or doing any thing to disturb the ordinary current of things. God almost always hides his hand behind the mechanism of nature. Yet, he makes every thing go, as we may say, more accurately than the most perfect clock-work, and always exactly as he wishes. Do not forget, my boys, that God's Providence is in every thing that comes to pass in this world; even in the little things which concern you, young as you are.

You see now, one other reason why I spoke to you some time ago, about the ages of Adam, Methuselah, Noah, Heber and Jacob. It was to show you how Joseph acquired his knowledge of the true God, and the true religion. Jacob, his father,



BABYLON.—RUINS OF THE BIRS NIMRUD, p. 157.

The whole earth wasof one language.

taught him these things. Jacob learned them from Isaac and Abraham: they in their turn may have learned them from Shem and Heber, and they from Noah, and Noah from Methuselah, and Methuselah from Adam. And perhaps (though some learned men doubt about it) Joseph spoke pretty much the same language that Adam did. For consider, it would be very strange, if Joseph did not speak the same language his father and grandfather did, seeing he lived with them; and equally strange, if Jacob did not speak the same language that Abraham did; and if Heber lived all the time Abraham lived, and they knew each other, (as no doubt they did,) and could talk with each other, they must have had the same language. Well, the Bible informs us, that when the tower of Babel was built, the whole earth was of one language; (Gen. xi. 1;) and this tower was built in Heber's life-time—although it is not probable, that he, or any good man, had any thing to do with that work—and if we bear in mind, that Heber was born only sixty-seven years after the flood, and that he lived with Noah 283 years, we cannot doubt that they spoke the same language. Now think again, Noah and Methuselah lived together 600 years, and Methuselah and Adam lived together 243 years. And what is more natural than that they should speak the same language.

The true God

our Preserver.

I mention this, to show you, that when Joseph spoke of the true God to the chief butler and chief baker, and to Pharaoh, (Gen. xl. 8 ; xli. 16,) he called him, it is probable, by the same name that Adam and Methuselah and Noah and Heber and Abraham did, when they worshiped him. That name was *Elohim*. Learned men inform us, that this name has a very peculiar meaning, which it is not probable Pharaoh understood. It means the true God—our Preserver and Governor,* who ought to be feared and worshiped, in opposition to false gods, and things that were not gods, such as the Egyptians worshiped. Joseph meant to designate the God whom he and his fathers had worshiped, and feared and trusted in,—the God who had protected and taken care of them, and not any god which Pharaoh and his people worshiped. But Pharaoh's mind was as much struck by Joseph's interpretation of his dream, as he was by the dream itself, and therefore, when he answered Joseph, he called God, according to Moses' words, by the same name that Joseph had called him by, and

* Thus, what Jacob says in Gen. xxviii. 21, may be understood in this way; "Jehovah shall be to me the *Elohim*," or "the Lord shall be my God." The word we employ, God, is derived from the word *good*, which comes to us from the Saxon language. But the word *Elohim*, (which has a different meaning,) is the first name by which the infinitely glorious, and most gracious Being, condescended to reveal himself to man. (Gen. i. 1 ; see Josh. xxii. 22 ; xxiv. 19 ; 1 Kings xviii. 39, 21, 24, and Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.)

Joseph's name

changed.

this, so far as we know, he had never done before. Now will go on with the history.

Although Pharaoh called Joseph's God by his true name, yet he was not willing to call Joseph by his true and proper name. For Joseph was a Hebrew, and a foreigner, and the idolatrous priests of Egypt were very powerful and very jealous. They had very great influence with the people, as well as the king, and it may be, that they were not very much pleased, when Joseph was put over their heads. This may be the reason, why Pharaoh gave Joseph an Egyptian name—such a name might make the Egyptians more easily forget that Joseph was a foreigner.*

The name Pharaoh gave him was Zaphnath Paaneah, which some say means *revealer of secrets*, or a man to whom secrets are revealed. Others say, it means a treasure of glorious comfort, and others still say, it means Saviour of the world, and this last is perhaps the true meaning. Others say that the name is made up of two Egyptian words, the meaning of which is not known. Whatever the name means, I do not think you will like

* Calmet remarks, that such a change of names was a mark of dominion and authority. It was customary for masters to impose new names upon their slaves; and rulers often, on their ascending the throne, assumed a different name from that which they had before. See another example of giving new names in the book of Daniel, chap. i. verse 7.

Potipherah's daughter

the wife of Joseph.

it as well as the name Joseph, and so we will still call Joseph by his Hebrew name.

Another thing, Pharaoh did, was to give him the daughter of a great man to be his wife. This great man's name was Potipherah or Potipherang. He was a different man from Potiphar, his former master. In the English Bible, he is called a priest of On, but in the ancient Latin and Greek Bibles, he is called a priest of Heliopolis. I told you some time ago, that both these names belonged to the same city. Some persons think, that Potipherah was not a priest, but a great man, or a nobleman, and they say the word, Moses uses,* sometimes means a great man, or a nobleman, and it may be so. Yet in the Bible this word commonly, signifies a priest. We have no reason to believe, however, that Joseph forsook his religion, or worshiped false

* The word is *Cohen*, which signifies a prince or ruler, as well as a priest. It sometimes signifies any other great officer : for Ira, the Jairite, is styled *Cohen* (in 2 Sam. xx. 26,) and the same title is given to Zabud the son of Nathan. (1 Kings iv. 5.) The Egyptians are said to have chosen their kings from among the priests, which may account for the double meaning of the word. An ancient author, quoted by Eusebius, says, that the *Cohen of Heliopolis* had a daughter who married one *Canebro*, which alludes, as a learned author supposes, to the marriage of Joseph, whom he calls *Can-ebro* (Cohen-hebri,) that is prince of the Hebrews, or the Hebrew prince. The same author supposes the word *Khan*, which we find applied to rulers, governors, and princes, in Persia and Tartary, is the same word differently written, and he says, the name of the celebrated Tartar emperor Jenghis-Khan, (Khingis Khan,) means king of kings, and so is a title of honor rather than his personal proper name.

Joseph's gratitude

to God.

gods, even if he did marry the daughter of a heathen priest. He always worshiped the God of Israel, his father, and for aught we know, Joseph taught his wife the true religion, and it may be, she also believed in the true God. One thing is certain, he brought up his sons in the knowledge and worship of the true God.

Joseph showed his gratitude to God, for this great change in his condition, by the names he gave to his two sons. One of them he called Manasseh, which signifies *forgetfulness*; because he said God had made him forget all his sorrow and his father's house. The other son, he called Ephraim; which signifies *fruitfulness*, because he said, God had made him fruitful in the land of his affliction, (Gen. xli. 51, 52.) Joseph was now as rich, and as great, as the most ambitious man could desire to be. He was surrounded by the greatest splendor of those times, and his meaning was, that his situation made him forget the misery and disgrace he suffered, while he was a slave, and the hatred and ill-will of his brethren, which he bore, while he lived with his father; and that he enjoyed the greatest abundance of the good things of this life, in the very land where he had suffered the greatest misfortunes and indignities.

It was very common for Hebrew parents to give names to their children, to signify something re-

Joseph thirty

years of age.

markable.* The Bible informs us, that God changed the name of Abram to Abraham, (Gen. xvii. 5,) and of Jacob to Israel, (Gen. xxxii. 28,) for this reason.

You must now think of Joseph as of a man thirty years old. I suppose you think a man thirty years old, is not young, but if you should live to be forty or fifty, you will consider a man of thirty years in the beginning of manhood. A man cannot be governor of this state (of Pennsylvania) before he is thirty years old, nor a senator until he is twenty-five years old. A man cannot be president of the United States, until he is thirty-five years old; nor a senator of the United States, before he is thirty years of age. You see then, that Joseph had just attained that age, when those, who formed our political constitutions thought that men are fit to be trusted with important state affairs, and capable of performing such trusts properly. But consider, how few opportunities Joseph had, of qualifying himself for the office Pharaoh had given him. He was sold as a slave, when he was about 17 years old, and had been in slavery, or in prison, from that

* Among the ancient Hebrews it was frequent, if not quite customary, (we are told) for mothers to give names to their children. At least, there are many examples of this practice in the Scriptures. (Gen. iv. 1,—xxix. 32, 33, 34, 35,—xxx. 6, 13; Luke i. 31, 60; 1 Sam. i. 20, and many other places.) Others say, it was the prerogative of the father to give the name whenever he chose to exercise it.

 Slaves advanced to

 high offices in the East.

time, till Pharaoh made him his prime minister. How do you think he could have gained knowledge enough to perform such duties? And if Pharaoh knew what sort of life Joseph had led, what could have influenced him to trust Joseph with so great power? Do you think that our countrymen would be likely to elect a man, who had led such a life, governor, or senator, or president? Would they not say, he may be very virtuous, but he cannot understand any thing about government and state affairs, and therefore we cannot trust him. It is true, in the countries of the East, and in ancient Egypt, people did not think as we do, about many things; and sometimes even slaves were advanced to very high public offices.* But we cannot explain the promotion of Joseph, as we can other cases of

* The following story shows, that in the East, even in more modern times, a servant may be as great, if not greater than his master :—Mahmoud the Great, sultan of Ghesna, was the son of a slave; but having stretched his conquests over a great part of India and Tartary, in the beginning of the eleventh century of our era, he sent an ambassador, to Khalif Alkader, requesting from him, as the successor (for that is the meaning of the word Khalif,) of Mahomet, and as the source of honor among Mahommedans, a title suitable to his rank and power. The Khalif, on account of the meanness of his origin, declined compliance for twelve months, when, urged by the ambassador, and dreading Mahmoud's resentment, he sent him the title *veli*, which implies either *a prince, a friend, or a slave*. Mahmoud easily understood the Khalif, and immediately sent 100,000 pieces of gold with a wish to know, whether a letter had not been changed or omitted in this title (*veli*.) Alkader, the Khalif, in his turn, also understood what Mahmoud meant, and soon after despatched to him *letters patent*, in full form, creating him *veli*, which signifies, without equivocation, *a sovereign, independent prince*.

Pharaoh had not heardof Joseph.

this kind, which have occurred in eastern nations. God's Providence is very plainly seen in the whole of Joseph's life. God made every thing prosper, (as I told you,) which Joseph took hold of. That was better for him than all the learning and experience of the world. It brought him into favor with Potiphar, and afterward with the keeper of the prison. God did so to Joseph afterward in his new office. This is the way in which Joseph was able to act wisely in his political trust.*

The conduct of Pharaoh cannot be explained in any other way. He had never seen Joseph before, and so far as we are informed, he knew nothing about him, till the chief butler spoke of him; therefore we cannot explain the exaltation of Joseph, as we can the promotion of other slaves we read of. It was all the work of Divine Providence, which took this way to bring about very important objects.

* Justin, a heathen historian, in his general history, speaks of Joseph in very remarkable terms. (Book xxxvi. 2.) He says, "Joseph was very dear to the king, for he was most sagacious in explaining prodigies, and first framed the interpretation of dreams, and nothing in Divine or human jurisprudence seemed to be unknown to him. He even foresaw the barrenness of the ground, many years before it happened, and all Egypt would have perished by famine, had not the king, by his counsel, ordered the fruits to be preserved for several years. And so excellent were his regulations, that they seemed rather to be oracular responses, *not given by man, but by God.*" This author lived in the second century, during the reign of Antoninus Pius. He abridged the Universal History of Trogus Pompeius, who lived in the time of Augustus Cæsar, about the commencement of the Christian era.

Joseph provides againstthe seven years of famine.

Soon after Joseph was promoted to this high office, he went out over all the land of Egypt, and into every part of it, (Gen. xli. 45, 46,) as I told you. Ancient Egypt was a very large and rich country, and very remarkable for many things.

If you remember what I have said about Egypt, you may form an idea from what I am now going to tell you, of the largeness of Joseph's employment. The seven years of plenty began immediately after he was promoted, and the Bible informs us, that the land brought forth by handfuls: that is, very abundantly, during all that time; just as Joseph had explained the king's dream. During the whole of this time, Joseph was very careful to provide against the famine of the seven years which were to follow. He had store-houses built throughout the country, and he stored in them an immense quantity of grain. That which grew not very far from the cities, he had stored in the cities. It would not have been convenient or wise to have all the grain stored at one place; because Egypt, I have shown you, was a large country, and the famine was coming upon the whole of it. But if he had barns and store-houses put up all over the country, he must have employed a great many men to do that work, from year to year, until the seven years were ended, and after that, he must have had a great many men under him to take care of these

The years offamine begin.

store-houses, and dispose of the grain. Joseph himself, it is true had only the oversight of this business ; but he had the other affairs of the king to attend to. If any of you should inquire, whether the people did not ask Joseph what he intended to do with so much grain, I could only reply that I do not know.

Perhaps some of the people had not heard of Pharaoh's dreams, and Joseph's interpretation of them ; and they must have wondered greatly, at what they saw his officers do. Joseph knew that when the famine came, they would be very glad that he had built so many store-houses, and had filled them so full. He was very certain the famine would come, for God would not have helped him to understand and explain Pharaoh's dreams, if he did not intend to bring a famine on the land, and just so it happened when the seven years of plenty were over ;—corn would no longer grow. Provisions became scarce, and dear, and bad, not only in Egypt, but in the countries around Egypt ; and bread was no where to be bought, except from Pharaoh, king of Egypt. After the years of plenty were over, and the years of the famine began, the people in all parts began to want, and all went to Pharaoh for food. But he sent them to Joseph, and told them to do what Joseph said. From him, all who came obtained corn. It must have made

The honorof God's service.

Joseph very happy, to know that God had employed him, to save so many people alive. The greatest honor any man, or any creature can ever have, is to be employed by the great God in doing good, and in executing the plans of the divine mind.

CHAPTER VIII.

Jacob and

his sons.

IT is time now, to return to Jacob and Joseph's older brethren: When we last spoke of them, they were at Hebron, in the land of Canaan.

First, let me ask you, if you remember how old Joseph was, when his brethren sold him to the Ishmaelitish and Midianitish merchants.

All. About seventeen years old:

How long after that, was he made the first minister in Egypt? He was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh. Deduct seventeen years from thirty years.

All. Thirteen years.

Well; now tell me how long it was from the time Joseph was sold by his brethren, until the beginning of the famine. You must add the seven years of plenty, to the thirteen years just mentioned.

All. Twenty years.

Yes: then Joseph had been absent from Hebron twenty years, when the famine began. During all this time, we do not know that he had heard of his father, or of his brother Benjamin.

But how old was Joseph when the years of famine began? Charles may answer.

Condition of

Jacob's family.

Charles. There were seven years of plenty, and Joseph was thirty years old when they began; of course he was thirty-seven years old, when the years of famine began.

How old was Jacob, when Joseph was thirty-seven years old. George may answer. Remember that Jacob was ninety-two years old, when Joseph was born. Add thirty-seven years, the age of Joseph.

George. Jacob was one hundred and twenty-nine years old, when Joseph was thirty-seven years old, and the famine began.

Then we are to think of Jacob as an old man, and Joseph as a man in the vigor of manhood. All Joseph's brethren were still alive, and led the same kind of life they did, when Joseph was with them. What had happened during the twenty years Joseph had been absent, we do not know. Jacob still mourned for Joseph, and Benjamin had now become his favorite son. He, as well as the other sons were all married, but when they married, or whom they married, we do not know, except that Judah and Simeon married women of Canaan. Probably the other sons did so likewise. At least it does not appear that Jacob sent to Padan Aram,*

* This place was *Aram* or *Syria*, eastward of the Euphrates. It was divided into two districts, the northern and southern. The upper, was called *Aram Naharaim*, or Aram between the two rivers, (Gen. xxiv. 10,) and by the Greeks *Mesopotamia*.

The famine

extensive.

to get them wives. The whole of Jacob's family, including his children and grand-children, was pretty large. (Gen. xlv.)

The famine, you know, was not confined to Egypt. The Bible informs us, that it extended to all lands, (Gen. xli. 54,) and some from all the adjoining countries went to Egypt to buy provisions. (Gen. xli. 57.) Egypt has always been looked to for supplies, in times of scarcity. Even the merchants of ancient Rome and Greece, at a later period, used to send to Egypt for grain, and other articles of commerce.* The land of Canaan, in

This was the country of Nahor, (Gen. xxiv. 10,) and of Laban, the Syrian, (Gen. xxxi. 10,) and of Balaam, the diviner. (Numb. xxiii. 7.) The lower part of this division was called *Padan Aram*, or the *champaign*, (i. e., open or flat,) *Aram*, (Gen. xxv. 20,) in which was the city *Haran*, Gen. xi. 31,) or *Charran*, as it is called in Acts vii. 2. To this place, Abraham and his family first emigrated from Ur of the Chaldees. It was in this country, that Abraham obtained a wife for Isaac; (Gen. xxiv. 10;) and to this country, Isaac sent Jacob. (Gen. xxviii. 1, 2.) *Aram* was the name of Shem's youngest son; (Gen. x. 22;) and from him, the country called Armenia evidently derived its name. It is a delightful and fruitful country.

* When Augustus Cæsar reduced Egypt to a province of the Roman Empire, he opened the canals of the Nile, which had been obstructed, and exacted by way of tribute, a certain quantity of wheat, to be sent annually to Italy. The quantity as stated by Aurelius Victor, seems incredibly great. It was no less than twenty millions of Roman Modii, each containing about one peck of our measure, or a little more, which would make this quantity equal to about five millions of bushels of wheat. Allowing that four Modii, or one bushel of wheat would weigh 60 pounds, the whole quantity thus exacted would weigh three hundred millions of pounds, or one hundred and fifty thousand tons of 2000 pounds each; and yet this quantity, we are told, was only one-third of the whole quantity, the Romans raised from their African provinces. The wheat was transported in ships of great burden. Lucian

Famines frequent

in Canaan.

which Jacob lived, appears to have been frequently subject to famine, before agriculture was known, or much practised. We read of a famine in the time of Abraham ; (Gen. xii. 10 ;) of another, in the time of Isaac ; (Gen. xxvi. ;) and now of another, in the time of Jacob. Whether Jacob had heard of the extraordinary years of plenty in Egypt, we do not know ; but when the famine came on the land, he heard from some one that there was corn in Egypt. This was good news to Jacob and his sons : for the famine was severe, and he and his large family were in danger of starving.

Accordingly, Jacob called his sons, and commanded them (excepting Benjamin) to go to Egypt, and buy corn for him and them.

Here you observe, a proof of what I told you some time ago, that the father or grandfather was the governor of his family or tribe, as long as he lived, and was able to command. Jacob was now one hundred and twenty-nine years old, but still had

mentions a ship that was 180 feet long, and 60 feet wide. (See Acts xxvii. 10, 18.) In these ships, the Romans imported, at the same time, drugs, spices, silks, tapestry, glass ; in short, all sorts of merchandise and produce furnished by the east. Some of them also carried many passengers. (Acts xxvii. 37.) The ships generally sailed together, and formed a large fleet. They made use of Puteoli as a harbor, probably, because they were too large to sail up the Tiber. The mariners, particularly, were subject to severe regulations, being obliged by the Roman laws, to use their utmost diligence, and they were liable to capital punishment if they went out of their course ; for Rome, although the mistress of nations, was often in want of bread.

Jacob's authority

as the Patriarch.

considerable vigor of body, and his mind was unimpaired. Isaac, the father of Jacob, had been dead several (perhaps eight or ten) years. Some of Jacob's older sons were men of mature years, and had families of their own. Yet Jacob was the patriarch and governor of the whole. "Go down thither," (said Jacob to his older sons,) "and buy corn for us." You observe here, that Jacob said, "Go down," and not simply, *go*. The reason is, Canaan was a higher region of country than Egypt, so that in going to Egypt they had to descend from higher to lower ground. In the New Testament, you often find the expression *go up* to Jerusalem; (Acts xv. 2; xxi. 4, 12; xxv. 9; Matt. xx. 18; Mark x. 33; Luke xviii. 31; John vii. 8;) and *go down from* Jerusalem. (Acts xxv. 5; Luke x. 30.) The reason is, Jerusalem was on higher ground than the rest of the country.

The sons of Jacob did as he bid them. Some of you may wish to inquire, why Jacob sent so many of his sons: why did he not send one or two of them, to buy corn for the rest? Different reasons are given for this. Some of the Jewish Rabbis inform us, that Joseph had established it as a rule, not to sell to one person more corn than was necessary for one family; lest persons should come and buy, for the purpose of retailing it at a profit. This would certainly be a very good reason, espe-

Jacob's ten sons

go to Egypt.

cially as Joseph knew that the famine would last seven years. It would be wrong also to speculate upon the miseries or grievous calamities of men. But we do not know that Jacob had heard of this rule, even if it had been made; and if he did not, that could not have been his reason. Others say, that traveling was dangerous in those times, and Jacob sent all, except Benjamin, in order that they might protect each other, in case of danger. But he would not send Benjamin, because he loved him so much, and would not let him run so great a risk; for he remembered Joseph, and the sad disaster which he supposed had befallen him. Beside this, they were to bring the corn on the backs of asses, and it was necessary, that all of them should go, and take with them a considerable number of these animals, or they could not bring enough to last them many days. Some persons think they must have taken several scores, if not hundreds of asses to bring a sufficiency for so large a family as Jacob's was, at that time. I think it more probable, these were the reasons, Jacob had for sending all except Benjamin.

Now observe another thing. The sons, whom Jacob thus sent, were the very ones, who were offended at Joseph's dreams, and were at Dothan, when Joseph went to see them. Moses alludes to this fact, in the 3rd verse of this 42nd chapter: for

Joseph sold cornto all who came.

he does not call them the sons of Jacob, or of Israel, but the brethren of Joseph; meaning that they were the same cruel brethren, who sent him into Egypt, in order to prevent his dreams from coming to pass. And Moses now shows how, in the providence of God, they were made to follow him, in order to fulfil the dream.

The route which they took, I need not describe to you again. You see it on the map before you. When they arrived, Joseph, as you know, was the governor, regent, or protector of the country, and the first officer under Pharaoh. The Bible informs us, that Joseph sold corn to all the people. But this does not mean that he made a bargain with every purchaser himself, and measured the grain with his own hands. The comers were very numerous, and Joseph must have had persons to act for him. But he superintended the whole business, and took care, no doubt, to retain a plentiful supply of corn for all the Egyptians, and perhaps, he made it a rule, that all strangers coming to buy, should be brought before him. Perhaps, he thought, that some of his own brethren would be forced by the famine to come, and if so, it would be very natural for him to make such a rule.

It is certain, at least, that Joseph's brethren were brought before him, and according to the custom of the country, prostrated themselves in his

Joseph recognizedhis brethren.

presence, with their faces to the ground. Here you see how the prophetic dream of Joseph, about the sheaves of corn, was fulfilled; which they vainly, in their anger, endeavored to prevent. "But there is neither wisdom, nor understanding, nor council against God." (Ps. lxxvi. 10.)

Joseph knew his brethren, as soon as he saw them, but they did not know him;—and no wonder. It was twenty-two years since they had seen him. From a youth of seventeen years, he had become a man of nearly thirty-nine years. The name, by which he was called, was not Joseph, but Zaphnath Paaneah. His dress was no longer that of a shepherd-boy, or a slave, but it was probably rich, or at least, corresponding to his exalted station. He did not speak Hebrew, but the Egyptian language. You may easily imagine, that these great changes in his appearance, were quite sufficient to prevent their knowing him. If they thought of him at all, and believed he was in Egypt, they must have supposed he was still the slave of some Egyptian master, employed in feeding cattle, or in doing some other menial service.

When Joseph saw only ten, and that the one absent was Benjamin, his younger brother, he would naturally wish to know what had become of him. He could not know but that they had treated Benjamin as badly as they had treated him;

Benjamin

absent

and it was natural for him to act in such a way, as to find out the truth.

Well, you may suppose the plainest and shortest way to ascertain that fact was, to ask them directly about Benjamin; but you must recollect, that Joseph had no reason to think very well of them, although they were his brothers. He had not seen or heard of them for twenty-two years, so far as we know; and for aught he knew, they might be just as wicked as when they robbed him of his coat, and threw him into the pit, to let him die there.

It would not have been prudent then, for Joseph first to let them know who he was, and then ask them plainly about Benjamin and his father; for he could not know whether he could trust them or believe what they said; so he acted just as if he did not know them, and spoke harshly, and asked them where they came from. In answer, they told him, they came from the land of Canaan, to buy food. This Joseph knew before, and he remembered the dreams he had dreamed about them, but what he wished chiefly to know, they had not yet told.

To find this out, Joseph still acted as though he was a stranger to them, as they took him to be; and charged them with being spies, or as we would say, *foot-men* or *foot-pads*, who are men, as you

Joseph accuses hisbrethren of being spies.

know, that lie in wait to rob or get the property of others. He charged them with having come, not to buy corn, but to see the nakedness of the land. This accusation led them on to speak about the very thing that Joseph wished to know. They answered him, "Not so, we are not spies, but all one man's sons: honest men are we; never were thy servants spies."

Joseph knew full well that they were all his own father's sons. There stood before him, Reuben, the oldest of the ten, and Simeon and Levi, the two most cruel—then Judah, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Napthali. They were grown men when he last saw them, and he could not be mistaken. But how did they expect to prove they were not spies or foot-men, by saying they were all one man's sons? Can any of you tell me?

It is a dangerous business to act as a spy. Do you know how spies are treated now-a-days?

All. Yes, sir, Major Andre was hanged for being a spy.

Well, then do you think it probable that one man would send all his sons, or ten sons, or be willing to let them go, upon so dangerous an undertaking?

All. No, sir.

That is just what they wished Joseph to think, and they thought they could convince him they

Reasons for

suspecting them.

were not spies, by telling him they were all one man's sons. You see they reasoned just as you would in the same case.

Does it not strike you as strange that they did not ask Joseph why he thought they were spies, or that Joseph did not give them some reasons for suspecting them?

William. He did not suspect them, he only pretended.

That is true, but they did not know that Joseph only pretended.

George. They were afraid to ask him, because Joseph appeared to be a great man and spoke harshly to them.

I think that very probable, but still there was something that might have made any officer of Pharaoh, except Joseph, really suspect them. It is very common in the East, even now, to suspect a person who is far away from home, of being a spy, unless he travels as a merchant, or on some public business. The people of the East in general, in former times, had no idea that a man would make a journey, unless he was compelled to do so, by necessity, or wished to make money by trading.*

* In many parts of the East, however, at the present day, the ideas of the people have been greatly enlarged by their intercourse with western nations, and the introduction of the arts and sciences of Christian nations, as well as the promulgation of the gospel, will, without doubt, exert a vast influence upon the eastern nations in many ways.

Joseph persists

in the charge.

This shows why Joseph's brethren told him, not only that they were all one man's sons, but that they came to buy food. You should remember also, that it was quite as common to employ persons as spies in those times as it is now. In the Bible you may find several examples, which I hope you will refer to and read. (Numb. xiii. 6.—xvii. 21, 32; Josh. ii. 1.—vi. 22, 25; Judg. xviii. 2.—xiv. 17; 2 Sam. x. 3; 1 Chron. xix. 3; 2 Kings xiii. 21; Numb. xxi. 1; 1 Sam. xxvi. 4; 2 Sam. xv. 10; Judges i. 24.)

Yet, after Joseph had heard this answer, he still persisted in the pretended charge. He said to them, "No, for ye have come to see the nakedness of the land," and by this, he meant, *the least defended part* of the land. As if he had said: "No, you have come to find out that part of the land which is least protected, so that you, and the hordes which sent you here, can break into the land, and attack our people and drive them out, and settle in the land yourselves."*

By this answer Joseph led them on to tell him

* Egypt was surrounded, on all sides, by Nomadic nations, and often suffered from their invasions; sometimes from the south, sometimes from the east. But these incursions seem never to have been more violent, or more continuing, than they were soon after the age of Joseph. So there was nothing improbable in the supposition that strangers might be spies. Joseph undoubtedly spoke the language of the times: for, as Mr. Bryant has shown, such suspicions and jealousies were not at that time uncommon among the Egyptians. This charge of Joseph, therefore, was not made at random, but had a particular reference to the state of the country.

His brethrenexculpate themselves.

what he wished to know about his father and brother Benjamin. For when they found, as they supposed, that Joseph did not believe them, they told him particulars, which could be proved very easily. They said, "We, thy servants, are twelve brethren, the sons of one man, in the land of Canaan, and behold the youngest, is now with our father; and one is no more." Their meaning was the same, as if they had said to Joseph: What we have told you can be easily proved, by sending into the land of Canaan, for our father still lives there, and we are ten of twelve sons which he had. "One of our brothers is dead, and another we have left behind with our father." Joseph now knew not only that his father, but that his brother Benjamin also was alive; for the ten brethren would not have told him a falsehood, because they did not know, but he would send some person to see whether it was so. And they must have thought, if they told a lie, and he should find it out, it would go hard with them. Joseph knew that they thought themselves in very great danger, and that they were trying to convince him they were honest men. He could therefore conclude, they told him the truth.

But this was not the only thing that Joseph desired:—for having found out that his father and brother Benjamin were alive, he wished to see them. But as he could not leave Egypt to visit

Why Joseph persistsin the charge.

them, the only way in which this could be brought about, was to send for Benjamin. Accordingly Joseph did not withdraw the accusation, but took them at their word. He still spoke roughly to them, through an interpreter, though he understood what they said, and could speak to them in their own language, with perfect ease. It was necessary for him to do this, in order to conceal his feelings, as well as to prevent them from knowing him. If he had spoken in Hebrew himself in a mild voice, their attention would have been drawn to him, and they might have recognized his voice and face. Besides, it was very hard for him to conceal his feelings, which were very tender toward them. True: they had treated him very barbarously; but he saw the hand of Divine Providence in the whole matter. The dreams he told them, he remembered and he began to see how God would fulfill them. He freely forgave them the wrong they had done him, and if he had thought it prudent to give vent to his feelings, he would have made himself known to them immediately. But that would not have been wise; because he could not know that they had not become even worse than they were, when they sold him.

This made him repeat, through the interpreter, what he had said before, and require them to prove what they had said about their other brother. He

Imprisons

his brethren.

said to them, "It is as I have spoken to you. Ye are spies—by this shall ye be proved. By the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go hence, except your youngest brother come hither." Perhaps what Joseph meant they should understand, was this: "You *now* tell me, that you have not all come down to Egypt. If all of you had come down to Egypt, or if you had told me at first, that you had left one behind, you might have been treated as honest men, but now you must bring your brother, or be treated as spies." He then told them how they might do this, "Send one of you and let him fetch your brother; but ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be truth in you: for if not, by the life of Pharaoh, ye are spies." Then he put them in prison and kept them there three days. Moses does not tell us what the brethren of Joseph said in reply to that, or whether they said any thing. No doubt, they felt very badly, and perhaps they could not agree who should go, and Joseph did not see proper to decide the question for them. Finding that they did not propose any one to him to go, he altered his decree on the third day, so as to make it easier for them. He said, "Do this: let one of your brethren be confined in the house of your ward, and the rest may go and take corn for the famine of your houses, and bring your youngest brother to

The decree

changed.

me." This, you see, was much less severe than the first decree. But he gave them a reason for changing his mind. One reason was that they might carry corn to their families. One of them could not take enough, but nine could. Joseph could not but know, that their families and his father and brother were in great want; and he was not willing they should suffer. This must have convinced them, that the governor of Egypt was a merciful man, and did not wish to treat them too severely. No doubt, they thought he really suspected them of being spies, and it was a part of Joseph's plan to make them think so: because he meant to make them bring Benjamin down, as if to clear themselves of the suspicion. Joseph gave them another reason. He told them through the interpreter, that he feared God.

Do you remember, George Jackson, what I told you about the word Elóhim some time ago? What is it the name of?

George. It is one of the names of God.

Right: but did the Egyptians worship the God, whom Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph worshiped under this name?

All. No, sir; the Egyptians worshiped false gods.

They did, and the brethren of Joseph must have been very much surprised to hear him say that he

The brethrenconfess their guilt.

feared Elóhim, or the God, whom they had been taught by their father Jacob to fear ; and I think it must have encouraged them very much, to hear him say so. For you may depend upon it, that a man who really fears the true God—the God who made the heavens, and the earth, will be afraid deliberately and wilfully to do wrong, to any of God's creatures. The brethren of Joseph must have thought so too ; for although some of them had done very wicked things, and were wicked and cruel themselves, yet in their trouble and distress, they would much rather be in the hands of one who feared the true God, than in the hands of one who neither feared, nor even knew him.

Now I wish you to consider the effect this last decision had on their minds, in another respect. One of them, they knew, was to be kept a prisoner in Egypt ; but they did not know who it would be, and each one would naturally fear for himself. This made them think of their own wicked conduct toward Joseph, and made them confess to themselves, their own guilt. For the Bible informs us :

They said to each other—"Truly we are guilty, because of our brother ; for we saw the anguish of his soul, when he implored us, but we would not hear : for that reason, this distress has come upon us." And then, Reuben, who you remember, disapproved of their conduct, and was so much dis-

Simeon

the hostage.

tressed, when he found that Joseph was not in the pit, reproved them, by repeating what he said at the time. "Did I not tell you," said he, "sin not against the child, but ye would not hear, and now his blood is required."

It is very plain from this, that they believed in the justice and overruling providence of God. It is very plain, too, that their own hearts and consciences made them feel very unhappy. They must have looked very much distressed. The trial was too great for Joseph, for he understood every word they said, although they did not suppose he understood them. But as he did not think it best, to let them know his feelings at that time, he turned away from them; perhaps went out of their sight and wept.

Now you see by this, that although Joseph spoke harshly to them, and called them spies, and determined at first to keep them all but one, and at last to keep one of them, he was very sorry to do so. His heart was full of affection for them all the time, and nothing was further from his wishes, than to do them the least harm.

After Joseph's feelings were composed, he returned and pointed out Simeon, as the brother who was to remain, and had him bound before them. Then he told his officers to fill their sacks with corn, and privately gave orders not to keep their

The othersreturn home.

money, but put the money of each into his own sack, and give them, over and above, provision enough for their journey home, and then let them go. When this was done, they loaded the corn on the asses, they had brought with them, and set out for home. Before we proceed farther in the history, I will mention several matters, which I wish you to remember.

Joseph's brethren, did not tell him the whole truth, and Joseph knew it. When they said they were twelve brethren, and that one was no more, they meant Joseph himself, but they told him what they did not know: for they could not know, that Joseph was not alive. They did not say, they had been guilty of selling their own brother. They would have been ashamed to tell that to any one, and they kept it a secret, even from their father. Joseph may have thought that this was the reason; but still, as they did not tell the whole truth, he could not know, that they had not kept back part of the truth about Benjamin, and that was reason enough, why he should make them prove their words, by bringing Benjamin to Egypt.

Some persons have said, that Joseph's conduct toward his brethren was too severe, but they do not judge him fairly; because they do not consider what his object was, nor make any allowance, on account of his not knowing whether they were dis-

Joseph's oath

by the life of Pharaoh.

posed to act like brothers toward each other, or whether they were not as wicked as they were twenty-two years before. As we go on, I shall try to explain Joseph's conduct, so that you will understand it.

Another thing I wish you to notice is this: In Joseph's conversation with his brethren, he swore by the life of Pharaoh twice. You remember that I told you Joseph was a good man, and you may wonder not a little, that he should swear at all. We are not bound to think that Joseph did not do wrong in taking this oath, because there is no good man, who does not do wrong sometimes. The Bible is a very impartial book; for while it tells us of a great many good men, it does not cover up or excuse their faults, but tells us of the wrong things they did, as well as of the good. But I think the reason he had for taking this oath was, that he wished so to act, as to prevent the least suspicion of his person and Hebrew origin. They thought he was an Egyptian. They would have been much surprised, if Joseph had sworn by the true God; but they would not be at all surprised to hear him swear by his own king. He might, it is true, have spoken without any oath, but then it was a part of his plan to speak harshly to them, in order to make them more afraid of him; and perhaps that is the reason he spoke to them, just as he

Oaths found

in the Bible.

would, if he had been really an Egyptian, and not their own brother, and a believer in the true God. After all, I think we should reckon this as one of the wrong things Joseph did; for the Bible is very strict against swearing, as I shall show you hereafter.

Now I will tell you something of the customs of the Hebrews, and other ancient and modern nations in this particular. The first oath, we find in the Bible, is the oath of Abraham, at Beersheba. (Gen. xxi. 23, 33.) You will find other examples in Gen. xxiv. 3, 9; xxv. 33; xlvii. 31; l. 5. But we read also in the Bible, of Abner swearing by the life of Saul. (1 Sam. xvii. 55; 2 Sam. xiv. 19; xv. 21.) The ancient Egyptians swore by Osiris,* one of the most celebrated of their false

* Pliny reproaches the Egyptians with swearing, by the leeks and onions of their gardens; and Juvenal, the poet, ridicules that superstitious people for not daring to eat leeks, garlic, or onions, through fear of injuring their gods. (Sat. 15.) What Juvenal says, has been translated thus:—

'Tis mortal sin an onion to devour,
Each clove of garlic is a heavenly power,
O holy nation, and O sacred clods,
Where every fruitful orchard teems with gods.

This poet had the opportunity of knowing more of the Egyptians, than probably he cared to know; for he was banished by the Roman Emperor, Nero, to Syena, (now called Essouan,) situated on the right bank of the Nile, in latitude $24^{\circ} 5' 23''$, where the Romans kept a garrison. Some ancient authors say, that at this place there was a deep well, the waters of which reflected perfectly the disc of the sun, at the summer solstice; which, it could not do, unless the sun, at noon, were exactly in the zenith. But if the obliquity of the ecliptic has not changed considerably



Oaths of

heathen nations.

gods. This was probably one of their deceased kings, and so in reality, never any thing more than a man.* This place in the Bible also proves, that the Egyptians swore by the life of Pharaoh, or the reigning king. The Persians swore by Mithras, or the sun. The Greeks and the Romans swore by false gods, of which they had a great many; but I need not tell you that such gods are nothing. It is said of Socrates, that he sometimes swore *by the dog and the goose*, which does not seem consistent with the gravity of his character. But Plato says, he referred, in this oath, to a god of the Egyptians. The Persians, Arabs, and in general, all Mahomedans, even now, swear by the stars. The Koran contains a great many oaths, which Mahomet made by the heaven, by the moon, and by the splendor of fire. One of the Roman Emperors required his people to swear by Augustus. In Persia, it was the custom also to swear by the king's beard, or by the king's death, or by the head of some superior person. The Jews also swore by their own

since this observation was made, it could hardly be correct; because the place is more than half of a degree of latitude north of the tropic, or the place where the sun turns.

* Learned men say, Osiris was a title conferred upon more persons than one, and some accounts of this personage evidently refer to Noah. Plutarch says, the Egyptians considered Osiris, the beginning—Isis the receptacle, and Orus the completion and perfection of the whole. Isis was called the treasury of nature, and the nurse of all things. Their ideas of these characters were very mystical.

Swearing

forbidden.

head. But you remember what our Saviour said, about swearing. (Matt. v. 34, 35, 36.) "Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King: neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black." You remember, too, the commandment—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain."

It would be very foolish, as well as wicked for you to swear in any such way as this.* Yet there

* There is nothing more striking in language, than the different effects, which the same words have upon the mind, in different ages. What would be intolerably rude, or even blasphemous, at the present day, was formerly the language of kings and churchmen. The oaths of many of the English monarchs, as recorded in history, were shockingly profane. The name of God was so rudely disfigured, as to be unintelligible by many, and to sound like blasphemy, to those who recognized it. We find examples of this kind of profanity, in Chaucer and Shakspeare. Happily, a great many such expressions have entirely gone out of use. But some of those obsolete forms, occurring in ancient English authors, were at first customarily used, only in a reverential way. For example: To swear "by Cocke and Pie," was once an oath of great solemnity. I' FAITH, was contracted from, *in faith*; it meant, *on my faith or belief*, which was in effect the legal oath, required in courts of justice. The meaning of the witness was, that he guaranteed the truth of what he said, by an appeal to the book which contained the doctrines, in which he had fixed his faith or confidence. But depend upon it, there is not a more certain mark of an uncultivated, vulgar mind, than the use of oaths or imprecations. The silly fool, who interlards his speech with oaths, or profane interjections, is generally unconscious, that he is doing so; and offends good taste, and good manners, and it may be, shocks the piety of those, who hear him, without being aware of his own grossness. He is stupid, as well as wicked. He himself, would

Heathenish

swearing.

are some boys, who would think it very wicked to swear by the true God, and yet think there is no harm in swearing by something else. This is a great mistake. It is very easy to prove by the Old Testament, that such swearing is not only wicked, but heathenish and idolatrous; and even the Old Testament forbids all such swearing. (Deut. vi. 13; x. 20; Josh. xxiii. 7; Isa. xlv. 23; lxxv. 16; Jer. xii. 16; Amos viii. 14; Zeph. i. 5.) The only kind of swearing which the Old Testament allows, is by the true God, with the reverence and solemnity, which every appeal to Almighty God requires. And many good men think, that our Saviour forbade swearing in every way, and so altered the law of the Old Testament in this respect. But I do not wish to enter into the discussion of disputed matters, which you cannot understand now. When you are older, you will be able to think for yourselves. It was proper, however, to tell you something of the customs of the ancients in this respect, and of the Egyptians

be astounded, if he were to learn the import of the words, which habitually escape his lips; as unmeaningly as the chatterings of a magpie. A want of manners, or of morals, betrays a want of sense.

In the solemn oath just mentioned, the word *pie* means the table, in the old missals, showing how to find the service for the day. It was so named, on account of the red and black ink in which it was printed. Hence it came, that when the printer's types were irregularly mixed in the distribution, or when a page was broken, or letters of different sizes were mixed together, the workmen called it **PIE**.

Another

question.

in particular ;—so that you may better understand this part of Joseph's conduct.

Now I will ask you a question:—Why did Joseph order his men, to put into his brethren's sacks, the money they brought to pay for the corn? William may answer.

William. Joseph did not wish to take pay from his brothers.

That is a pretty good answer, William ; but can you not think of some more special reason? If you should buy an article at a store, and after returning home, should find the money you took to pay for it, in the bundle—do you think it would be honest to keep it, and say nothing about it?

All. No, sir.

What should you do in such a case?

All. Take it back to the merchant.

Perhaps then Joseph meant to find out in this way, whether they were honest men. You remember, they sold him to the Arabs for twenty pieces of silver. This was very shameful conduct, more so, than if they had given him away for nothing. It proved they were avaricious, as well as cruel. It is a wonder they could make use of money obtained in that way. They, no doubt, brought a much larger sum of money to buy corn, and if they were still avaricious, they would be tempted to stay away and keep the money ; but if

Joseph's design

benevolent.

they returned immediately, and brought the money back, and Benjamin, as they promised, then Joseph would know, that they had become better men, or at least, that they loved their brother Simeon, more than they coveted the money: For Joseph had not seen them for more than twenty years, and he did not know, that they were not as cruel and hard-hearted as they were, when they sold him for such a paltry sum.

Joseph had a benevolent design in all that he did; and I will now tell you what I think it was: He wished to bring them and his father and brother Benjamin to Egypt and have them live near him, so that he could see them and take care of them. (Gen. xlv. 9, 10, 11.) He knew, that the famine would continue more than five years longer, and that it would not be confined to Egypt. But he also knew, that it would not be prudent to do this, if his brothers were still passionate, violent, unfeeling, and avaricious men, without affection for each other. For although Joseph had great power, yet he was a foreigner, and it was but a little while, since he was a poor slave in prison, whom no one seemed to care any thing about. He knew too, that the Egyptians were prejudiced against all strangers, and it would be dangerous for him to bring his brothers to live near him, if they were such men as he feared they were. He wished

Joseph's harshmanners assumed.

therefore to find out, in some sure way, what sort of men they were, and how they felt toward each other. In this way we can explain Joseph's conduct to his brethren. His harsh manner was only put on, that he might know whether he could safely trust them. We will now take up the story again.

CHAPTER IX.

Joseph's brethren

set out to return.

SIMEON having been bound and kept back, the other brethren set off to return with the grain they had bought. Their way home was over the desert.* You see on the map the course they took. At that time, there were no inns or taverns for the accommodation of travelers, nor are there any, now. Travelers generally endeavor to reach some well or place, where they can fill their *girbahs*† or large leathern bottles with fresh water; then they put

* All to the east of Lower Egypt, as far as to Gaza in Palestine, was desert; (Acts viii. 26,) and the desert commenced from the river Pelusium, the eastern branch of the Nile. In fact, the whole space from Lower Egypt to Palestine and to the Red Sea, taken in every direction, was at all times a desert. No provinces or cities were there. Even the few towns along the sea-coast from Egypt to Palestine seem to have been bare of the necessaries of life. One of these towns was Ostracine, where water was so scarce, that to ask drink of an inhabitant, became a proverbial expression for *asking alms of a beggar*. Mount Cassius, which you see laid down on the map, was a sharp sandy hillock without water. Rhinocolura was as badly circumstanced as Ostracine. It was surrounded by a morass of sea water, which affected the water of their wells, and bad as their water seems to have been, there was even a scarcity of it.

† A modern traveler describes the girbah as an ox skin squared, and the edges sewed so tight as not to let out water. An opening is left at the top, like the bung-hole of a cask, which is safely confined by a cord. These girbahs contain about sixty gallons of water and two of them are the load of a camel. They are greased outside, for the double purpose of preventing the water from running out or evaporating by the heat of the sun.

Their joy mixedwith sorrow.

clogs upon their camels or asses and let them eat any grass or shrubs about the place, or feed them with the provender they carry with them; and when rested, they resume their journey. It was probably at such a place as this, the brethren first stopped. One of them opened his sack, to take out some provender, and saw his money:—this made them all wonder very much. They were even terrified, and began to think God would bring some dreadful evil upon them, before they reached home. They all felt guilty for what they had done to Joseph and to their aged father, and although so many years had gone by, they had lived a lie all the while, and they knew that God never forgets any thing. They were afraid, therefore, that the time had come, when God would punish them for their great wickedness. They had gone too far to return, and so they continued their journey. They arrived safely in Canaan, but the joy of their return was mixed with sorrow; as it often happens in this world. Simeon was not with them, and they were obliged to tell their father all that had happened in Egypt. You may easily believe, they felt it to be a very serious matter. They were obliged to tell all, in order to obtain their father's permission for Benjamin to accompany them on their next journey to Egypt. When they emptied their sacks, every one found in his own sack, the

Jacob's

perplexity

money he had taken to Egypt, and that alarmed them as well as their father. So long as only one had found his money, they might think it happened by mistake; but they could scarcely think, that all had got their money back by a mistake. They probably feared for Simeon, whom they had left behind.

Old Jacob could not contain himself, and he blamed his sons, for the part they had in bringing about these disasters. He said, "All are upon me,"—an expression of despair—by which he meant to say, he had no hope of any thing good. He thought that Joseph had been destroyed by a wild beast; Simeon, he now learned, had been taken away from him, Benjamin was now demanded, and he feared that he also would be lost, if he trusted him to their hands.

It appears, that Jacob's sons wished to return immediately with Benjamin, in order to get their brother Simeon released; because Reuben, the oldest son, offered to be surety to his father, for Benjamin's safety. But the proposal he made to his father was a very strange one. It was this: "Slay my two sons,* if I bring him not unto thee. Deliver him into my hand, and I will restore him to

* We learn from Genesis xlv. 9, that Reuben had four sons at the time the family of Jacob departed to Egypt, and perhaps two sons had been born to him after the time we are speaking of.

Jacob's deep sorrowsand strong fears.

thee." Reuben could not have supposed that Jacob, his father, would slay his own grandchildren on any account. That would be to add to his own afflictions. It was Reuben's strong way of speaking. He wished to show, how much in earnest he was, and how he would risk any thing to comfort his father. Reuben, you remember, was the brother who tried to save Joseph, and he appears to have been the most affectionate to Joseph of the ten. But his offer had no effect upon Jacob. He said, "No; my son shall not go down with you: for his brother is dead and he is left alone. If mischief should befall him on the way which ye go, ye will bring down my hoary head with sorrow to the grave."

I wish you now to consider, how much Jacob was perplexed and distressed. He loved Simeon, and he loved Benjamin. Simeon was confined in prison in Egypt, and Jacob could not expect ever to see Simeon again unless he let Benjamin go down to Egypt. But he remembered the loss of Joseph, who was Benjamin's own brother; he was afraid to let Benjamin go, lest he should lose him as well as Joseph and Simeon. He was straightened between deep sorrows and strong fears, and his fears prevailed, until the famine and fear of death (as we shall see) compelled him to consent.

It is not probable that Joseph foresaw his father

Judah persuades

Jacob.

would refuse to let Benjamin leave him. Perhaps he thought his brethren would tell his father, that he had said, "I fear God,"—that is the true God, whom they called Elóhim, and that Jacob would have confidence in his justice, on that account; but they did not repeat these words of Joseph, so far as we know, and the refusal of Jacob to let Benjamin go, interfered with Joseph's plan: for after time enough had passed for them to go and return twice, and they did not come, Joseph began to suspect, perhaps, that they did not care any thing about Simeon; or that they were dishonest, and wished to keep the money; yet he knew the famine would compel them to come, as soon as their corn was consumed; and so it happened. For the Bible informs us, that when they had consumed the food, Jacob commanded them to return to Egypt and buy more.

As Reuben had tried all he could, to persuade his father to let Benjamin return with them immediately, but without success, Judah came forward now, to use his influence. He told his father, "the man," (meaning Joseph) "did protest, ye shall not behold my face, unless your brother be with you. If then, thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy food for thee; but if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down; for the man

Explains

their conduct.

said, ye shall not behold my face, unless your brother be with you."

Jacob did not expect this answer ; he had spoken as if he had made up his mind to keep Benjamin back, because he said nothing about Simeon. He thought, perhaps, they might buy food, without much difficulty, although they could not get Simeon released, without taking Benjamin with them. But his sons had already told him, that the lord of the land would not let them traffic in the land, unless they brought their brother with them.

Judah's resolution greatly distressed Jacob, and the good old man did, what a great many men and boys are apt to do, when they get into trouble, through some unforeseen circumstance, for which no one ought to be blamed. He cried out earnestly, "Why did you treat me so ill, by telling the man you had another brother?"

Judah and his brethren had a good reason for speaking to the governor of Egypt about their father and Benjamin, and they said so : "The man did question us strictly, concerning ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Your father, is he yet alive? Have ye a brother?' We told him according to these words. Could we know that he would say, bring down your brother?" Jacob did not answer his sons, and Judah then said to his father, "Send the youth with me ; and we will arise and go, that

Pledges hisfilial reverence.

we live, and die not, we as well as thou and our children. I will be surety for him,—at my hand thou shalt demand him. If I restore him not unto thee, and place him before thee, I shall have sinned against thee all my days. Had we not tarried, surely now we had returned twice.”

Judah spoke like a discreet man. He did not, like Reuben, offer the life of his two sons in pledge for Benjamin—that would have been no security at all; but with true manliness, he pledged his filial reverence and duty, by consenting to be considered all his life, as one who had sinned against his father. You remember that I told you, the father or grandfather of a family, in ancient times, was the ruler and governor of the whole, so long as he retained his strength and his mind to command; and his children, grandchildren and other descendents showed him the greatest respect. This speech of Judah is an example of the respect and reverence he felt for his aged parent.

There is another thing, I wish you to observe, Judah calls Benjamin a youth, but he did not mean that he was a little boy—Benjamin was a little boy when Joseph was sold to the Arabs, which took place about twenty-two years before. So that Benjamin was perhaps twenty-five or twenty-six, or it may be near thirty years old at this time.*

* Benjamin had at this time, or shortly afterward, ten sons, (as

Jacob

yields.

Jacob did not fear for Benjamin, because he was too young to take so long a journey, but he feared lest some evil would happen to him on the journey, or in Egypt, by which he would lose him as he lost Joseph.

Judah convinced Jacob, that he must consent to let Benjamin go, or they would all die of the famine,—Benjamin as well as the rest.

Listen now to what Jacob said, “ Since it must be so—do this : take of the best fruits of the land in your vessels ; and carry down a present to the man, a little balm, a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds.* Take also double money with

appears by Gen. xlv. 21,) none of the other brothers had as many. Mr. Clinton, without fixing his age precisely, says it was under thirty.

* We should not think of making a present of such things now-a-days ; but rather of some curious article of manufacture. The arts, however, were unknown in Canaan, in Jacob's time. This we might almost infer from the present, which Jacob directed his sons to prepare. Nor should we think at this time of making a present of some works of art or manufacture, which would have been highly esteemed three hundred years ago. Pins, for example, were once a princely present. They were first made in England in 1543, according to Stow. Before the art of making them was invented, the ladies used wooden skewers. One of the articles of the statutes of the pin-makers of Paris, about that time, was, that no master pin-maker should open more than one shop for the sale of his wares, *except on New Year's day and its eve*. The simplicity of those times, was contented with presenting *pins* for a new year's gift. Hence, the custom of giving the name, *pins*, or *pin-money* to certain gifts, that accompany the most considerable bargains. Hence, too, the term *pin-money* is applied to the allowance, that is often made by a husband to his wife, for her own individual use. The arts and sciences in their progress have influenced the manners and customs of society in a great many ways, as you may conjecture by these examples.

Gifts to the great

customary.

you—the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks, take back with you. Perhaps it was an oversight. Take your brother also. Arise and return to the man.”

You see by this, how Jacob took the ordering of the whole business on himself, and commanded his sons, who were grown men, and had families of their own, as if they had been boys, or very young men. But Jacob could not let them leave him, without a parting prayer for them. This was his prayer: “May God Almighty grant you favor before the man, that he may dismiss your other brother and Benjamin.” You see by this, how firmly Jacob believed in the overruling providence of God. He knew that God could influence the hearts of all men, just as he pleased. This thought comforted him, while parting with Benjamin.

The sons of Jacob did as he bade them. It has been the custom, from the earliest times, especially in the east, to make presents to great men; and this custom, is referred to by Solomon. (Prov. xviii. 16.) “A man’s gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.”* The pre-

* So true has this proverb of Solomon been found, by experience in all ages, that the wise men, who formed the constitution of the United States, thought it important to forbid the President of the United States, and all ambassadors, judges, and other persons, holding offices of profit or trust under the United States, to accept any present of any kind from any king, prince, or foreign State, without the consent of Congress. A few years ago, an Arabian

The most celebrated

products of Canaan.

sent consisted of such fruits, as grew in the land of Canaan. The words of Moses would strike you as very singular. What he said was, "Take with you of *the song of the land*," by which he meant, as some think, take the most celebrated productions of the land; such as balm, honey, and the other things he mentioned. By this, you may know, what productions of Canaan were at that time most esteemed. But Egypt produced a great quantity of honey, and why should they think of taking honey to Egypt? Some think, it was a peculiar kind of honey, called date-honey,* or syrup of grapes. Some of these things are mentioned in Ezekiel xxvii. 17, as articles of trade.† The

prince, the Imaun of Muscat, sent some fine horses, and other things to the President of the United States, as a present, but the President could not accept them.

* The honey of the Palm-tree, is esteemed a great delicacy. A modern traveler says, that in order to procure it, the crown of the tree is cut off, and the trunk scooped into the shape of a basin; into which, the sap rises. For nearly the first fortnight, the tree yields three or four quarts a day. Afterward, it gradually diminishes. The liquor is sweeter than honey, but when kept long, it grows tart, and acquires an intoxicating quality.

† Wine was not produced in Egypt, but it was in Palestine, and also oil. The beautiful poetry of Deut. xxxii 13, scarcely expresses more than the fact, as it might be stated in prose: "Jehovah has made Jacob to *suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the hard flint*." Honey was probably a much more important article of trade then, than now, as sugar was not then known. It appears by Hosea, xii. 1, that oil was carried from Palestine to Egypt. The same prophet, speaks of the wine of Lebanon, (ch. xiv. 7,) and Ezekiel speaks of the wine of Helbon, (ch. xxvii. 18.) In Sol. Song, (viii. 2,) we read of spiced wine. Learned men are divided concerning the country to which sugar was indigenous. Some say, it came originally from China. Others say, it is as natural to America as India. Others say, it was not known in

Honey, ladanum,

Pistachio nuts.

myrrh spoken of, is sometimes called *ladanum*. It was a gum, used as medicine, and as a perfume. Sometimes it was burned for the smell and effect of the smoke. This excellent balsamic drug is produced also, in the islands of Crete and Cyprus. The nuts which Jacob spoke of, some suppose were pistachio nuts, which grow plentifully in Palestine and Syria, but are very rare, or not to be found at all, in Egypt. These nuts are generally not larger than a hazel nut. The kernel is soft, oily, and very agreeable to the taste; somewhat like the sweet almond in flavor. It is very remarkable, that when one of these trees stands by itself, the nuts have no kernels, but when several grow near together, they produce kernels. This tree is very beautiful in October, when it is generally laden with clusters of ripe, smooth nuts, of a pale bluish color. The limbs of the tree are remarkably crooked, and branch off from each other, in an irregular manner. This kind of tree grows wild on Mt. Tabor and Mt. Nebo,* now called Attarous.

America till it was transplanted by Europeans. The most prevalent opinion, perhaps, is that sugar had its origin in the eastern part of Asia; that it was transplanted first to Cyprus; thence to Sicily; thence to Madeira, and the Canary Islands; from these last to Brazil. About 1506 sugar canes were brought from Brazil and the Canaries, to Hispaniola; and in 1641, from Brazil to Barbadoes, and from thence, it was taken to the British West India Islands. Our ancestors made use of sugar, rough, as it came from the cane. The boiling, baking, and refining of sugar, is comparatively a modern invention.

* Nebo was one of the mountains of Abarim;—a ridge of con-

Almonds,

balm of Gilead

You have all seen almonds ?

All. Yes, sir.

But not an almond tree, I presume. The almond, is a remarkable tree, but very common in Palestine, and one of the peculiar productions of the country. The Hebrews called it, by a word, which signifies *to be sleepless*, or *to watch*, because it blossoms and bears its fruit very early. (Jer. i. 11, 12.) You have heard of the rod of Aaron. That was an almond rod, which miraculously blossomed in one night. (Numb. xvii.) The almond tree is spreading and beautiful; and the flower of the almond was chosen as the model of the bowls of the golden candlesticks in the tabernacle. (Exod. xxv. 33.) The balm, spoken of by Jacob, was perhaps the balm of Gilead.*

You have an idea now of the kind of presents,

siderable extent between the rivers Arnon and Jordan, separating the land of Canaan, from the Moabites, Amorites, and Ammonites. These mountains are steep and high, and present from their summits grand views of the country of Canaan. Mt. Nebo was probably the highest peak in this chain, and it would seem from Deut. xxxiv. 1, that it was also called Pisgah; or if there was any distinction, Pisgah was rather the top of the mountain, or some part of it, where there were steps cut out to go up. The name Pisgah, signifies *high hill*, or according to others, *cut out*. It is over against Jericho.

* This balm was the product of a balsam tree, and procured by making an incision through the bark. It has been used as a medicine, as well as a cosmetic. This tree grows, it is said, all along the coast of the Red Sea, to the straits of Babelmandel, and also in Arabia, into which it has been transplanted. It grows to the height of about fourteen feet,—has only a few leaves or flowers, which bear some resemblance to those of the acacia. It is found among the myrrh trees.



ALMOND TREE, (*Amygdalus communis*.) p. 206.

Joseph's brethren

taken to his house.

that Jacob bid his sons take with them to Egypt, as a token of his respect to the Lord of the land, and to gain his favor. With these gifts, and double the money, the ten sons of Jacob proceeded on their second journey to Egypt, and arrived at the city of On again. The place where they first saw Joseph, was not his own house. Perhaps it was some public place—one of the public store-houses. Joseph saw his brethren again with great pleasure, especially Benjamin. He called his principal servant, and bid him take them to his house, and to “slay and make ready ;” (which meant, prepare an entertainment) for them and him, at mid-day.* By this, we know, that they went to see him in the morning. It was not the custom of the Egyptians to eat meat, except that of the offerings made in their temples; and their priests did not eat any meat at all.† They took their dinner, customarily, at noon, and

* Hours, as a division of the day, are not mentioned in Scripture, before the times of the prophet Daniel. (Dan. iii. 6 ; iv. 19.) This division of time was very probably an invention of the Chaldeans, or Babylonians; for Herodotus says, the Greeks received the twelve parts of the day from the Babylonians. But Macrobius says, that Julius Cæsar, when he took it in hand to correct the Roman calendar, effected it upon Egyptian principles; “copying those great masters, who were the only proficients upon the earth, in the noble and divine sciences.”

† The priests were very abstemious. Porphyry says, their food was very simple and plain—that they tasted no wine, and abstained from all fish, and all four-footed animals that were either solid hoofed, or divided the hoof, unless they were of the horned species; and from all carnivorous birds. The flesh of a cow or heifer, they never could be induced to taste; and Plutarch says, they were not allowed to taste the flesh of sheep.

They are alarmedat the distinction.

when a family made an entertainment for strangers, they did not buy their meat of butchers, as we do, but had it slaughtered on their own grounds, and cooked it almost as soon as it was killed.* Travelers inform us, that the same custom prevails now

Joseph's brethren were alarmed when the man came to take them into the house; for you must remember, as I told you before, Joseph spoke in the Egyptian language, which they did not understand. Perhaps they were the more afraid, because they did not see any other persons treated in the same way. They thought, perhaps, it was on account of the money they took home the first time; and they were afraid of having their asses taken from them, and of being made slaves themselves. This was another trouble. So, when they arrived at the door of Joseph's house, they spoke to the man, who was conducting them, about the money. One of them said, "Pardon, my lord, we came down before indeed, to buy food, and when we reached our resting place, we opened our sacks, and the money of each, was at the mouth of his sack—our money in weight;† but we have brought it back

* In the scorching regions of the east, meat is dressed immediately after the animal is killed, lest it should become unfit for use, and for the same reason, bread is baked as it is wanted. Gen. xviii. 6, 7, furnishes an example of this practice.

† By this, you see again, that money, in those times, was

The steward's

answer.

with us, and we have also brought with us other money to buy food. We do not know who put our money into our sacks."

Joseph's steward answered them very kindly. We do not know whether Joseph had told the steward what to say to them, but it is very plain that Joseph did not wish them to know, he had ordered any body to return their money; and perhaps the steward did not know how it happened. I do not think he knew that these men were Joseph's brethren; but he no doubt knew that Joseph took a great interest in them, and was quite sure, that he did not mean to do them harm. His answer is very remarkable. It was this:—"Peace be to you; do not be afraid; your God, and the God of your fathers, gave you treasures in your sacks. Your money I received."

You observe, the steward said, he received their money; and we have no reason to doubt his word. If he was not the person that put it back by Joseph's command, perhaps he only meant to say to them, that they were not accountable for it, because it came into his hands, and that was enough to excuse them. Some persons think that some other person put it back, and the steward knew

weighed and not counted as it is now. It is worthy of being known also, that the word *sack* is nearly the same in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and English, and in fact in all the Indo-Germanic languages.

The money paidfor the king's corn.

nothing about the matter. I think it probable, that Joseph expected his brethren would feel uneasy about the money, and would speak about it, and therefore told the steward what to say, if they mentioned it. But whose money was it, do you think, after it had been paid away by them for the corn? You may answer, David.

David. It was Joseph's money.

Think again. Who owned the corn, which Joseph's brethren bought with the money?

David. Pharaoh the king.

Well, then, was it not the king's money?

All. Yes, sir.

Had Joseph any right, then, to give away the king's money?

All. No, sir.

Did not Joseph then do wrong to give the money back to his brethren, after he had received it for the king's corn? What do you think, William?

William. You told us, sir, that Joseph was the first minister of the king, and that the king gave him authority to act as he pleased.

That is true; still he was bound to act honestly, and it would not be honest for him, to give the king's money to his brethren without permission.

William. Perhaps the king gave permission.

It may be he did. Though it is not very probable that the king knew any thing about it—or it

True honestya principle.

may be, that the king had given him power to do such things, if he thought proper. Or it may be, that Joseph took as much money of his own, and put it into the king's treasury; and so made the matter right. The Bible does not inform us about these particulars. But I think we may be sure, that Joseph made the matter right in some way: for he was a conscientious man, and would not do wrong to the king, rich as he was, any sooner than he would do wrong to a poor man. This only, would be true honesty. Joseph was a very high officer of the king; and the king was so rich, that he never would have missed a much larger sum, but that made no difference. Joseph was bound to be careful of the king's money, and not waste it or give it away, or use it without lawful authority. If any one of you should ever hold a public office, and have the handling of the public money, you should make it a point to be inflexibly honest and true, even in those small things, that you may suppose would never be missed. He that can be unjust in little things, with an easy conscience, will be very likely to be unjust in larger things: at least, if he is not so, the fear of being found out and disgraced or punished, and not conscience, probably will be the motive that restrains him. This is very different from true honesty, founded on the fear of God, which is the very best security for any

“Peace to you”a salutation.

man's good conduct, that any king or government can have, and a thousand times more to be relied on, than the bonds and sureties commonly taken. If you observe this rule, you will have no occasion to accuse the world of want of confidence. But if you are dishonest, and use unlawfully, or abuse, or give away what does not belong to you, it will be no wonder if you find people very suspicious of you.

There are some boys here, that are careful of their books, and clothing, and whatever else is furnished them in this college. This is a very good sign. It shows that they are careful, and I hope conscientious, and not willing to waste or abuse the things that are so kindly provided for them. The habit of carefulness will also be of great value to you.

Those who allow themselves to waste or abuse nothing they have, will be most likely to have a plenty to use.

Now we will go back to the steward. The first words he said in answer to Joseph's brethren were, “Peace to you.” In the eastern countries, the customary friendly salutation when persons meet is —“Peace to you.” Sometimes their salutations are long and tedious, and because they were sometimes long and took up time, it was customary when a person was traveling in haste, not to salute

Washing the feetusual.

any one he met. It was for this reason, and not because our Lord disapproved of such courtesies, that he commanded the seventy disciples, when he sent them before him to preach, not to salute any man by the way. (Luke x. 4.) The same command, Elisha gave to Gehazi, when he sent him to lay his staff on the face of the Shunamite's dead son. (2 Kings iv. 29.)

But Joseph's steward had not just met with the brethren, when he said, "Peace to you," and he did not mean it as a mere greeting. He meant to quiet their fears and make them feel easy. Then he brought out Simeon to them, and no doubt they were very glad to see him. They would naturally inquire of him, how he had fared, during their separation, and you may be sure, that Simeon told them he had not been harmed at all. That would make them feel still more at ease, and still less afraid of Joseph. After that, the steward gave them water, and they washed their feet.

Perhaps you do not know, that it was very customary in the East, when persons traveled on foot, to wash their feet whenever they came to their resting place. This was very necessary for their comfort. They did not wear such shoes and stockings, or boots, as we have,* and the dust and sweat

* Shoes, now made usually of leather, have been made of very various materials in different ages and countries. They have been

And necessary

after traveling.

made it quite necessary for them to wash their feet very often. Joseph's brethren, as you may see by the map, had traveled far. It was a hot climate and a part of the way, they had come, was sandy. It was very kind, then, in the steward to give them water to wash their feet. It was also customary in the East, for a person who had invited guests to give them water to wash their feet, (Gen. xviii. 4,) and in the houses of great or rich

made of raw skins, of rushes, of paper, flax, silk, wood, iron, silver, and gold. Their shape, color and ornaments have been very various. The patricians, among the Romans, wore an ivory crescent on their shoes. Isaiah speaks also of the moons, which Jewish women wore on their shoes. (ch. iii. 18.) Heliogabalus had his covered with very white linen. Caligula wore his adorned with precious stones. The East Indians, like the Egyptians, wore shoes made of the bark of the Papyrus. Pythagorus would have his disciples wear shoes made of the bark of trees. In the reign of Edward IV. of England, there was an extraordinary method of adorning shoes, with long peaks turning upward from the toe and fastened by silver chains or laces to the knees. So true is the observation, that—

“New customs,

Though they be never so ridiculous,

Nay, let 'em be unmanly, yet are followed.”

But this custom was forbidden by a penal statute of the same monarch's reign. As to stockings: they were anciently made of cloth sewed together, but since the invention of knitting and weaving stockings of silk, cotton, wool, thread, etc. the use of cloth stockings has been discontinued. Henry VIII. of England, usually wore cloth hose, unless there came, by a great chance, a pair of silk stockings from Spain. His son, Edward VI., was presented with a pair of long Spanish silk stockings, by Sir Thomas Gresham, and the present was then much taken notice of. Hence, it would seem, that the invention of silk knit stockings came from Spain. There is a letter of James VI. of Scotland, requesting the Earl of Mar, to lend him a pair of silk stockings, because he was going to give audience to the French ambassador. The art of weaving stockings in a frame, was invented in 1589, by William Lee.

Joseph's

inquiries.

men, the servants washed the feet of the guest or of the traveler. Our Saviour referred to the custom on several occasions. (Luke vii. 44; John xiii. 10, 14.)

The brethren of Joseph then prepared their present, so as to have it ready, when Joseph came in: for some one had told them, they should eat bread at his house. When Joseph came home, they brought him their present and bowed themselves to him to the ground.* You see here again, how Joseph's dream about the sheaves was fulfilled. Joseph then asked them about their welfare, and about his father, but in such a way, as not to let his brethren know who he was. Observe the way in which he put his question: "Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he alive?" As he had always before spoken to them in the Egyptian language, and employed an interpreter to explain his words, it is to be taken for granted, he did so, at this time. If he had used the Hebrew language, they would have been much surprised, and wondered in their own minds, who he was.

The brethren answered him in this way: "Thy servant, our father, is well, he is yet alive;" and then they bowed and prostrated themselves again. When they did this, they had no thought that

* According to the customs of the East, by accepting their present, he necessarily became their friend.

His salutationto Benjamin

they were fulfilling Joseph's dream. Nor do I suppose, they did any thing that was not customary in those times, and in that country, when common men came into the presence of kings or great men.

Joseph's conduct to his brethren, was very kind on this occasion; and no doubt they were relieved of their fears, especially when he spoke to Benjamin. Do you remember, Ward, how old Benjamin was, when Joseph last saw him?

Ward. He was a little boy, four or five years old.

It was about twenty-two years before, so that Benjamin had greatly changed in his appearance; and Joseph could not have known him, if he had met him any where else, in other company. So Joseph asked them, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me." Moses does not inform us, what answer they gave; perhaps they bowed, or signified their assent by some sign; for Joseph immediately spoke to Benjamin in the most polite and affectionate manner—"May God be gracious to thee, my son."

Here you observe again, Joseph spoke of the true God, and not of any of the false gods of the Egyptians. Moses employs the same name as he did before.

Can you tell me the name I told you, he employed before, Henry?

Joseph's feelingstoward Benjamin.

Henry. Elóhim.

Right; and it must have struck the brethren of Joseph as very remarkable that Joseph, whom they supposed was all the time an Egyptian, should speak of the true God, in the way they had heard their father speak of him. But it would have been wrong in Joseph to have done otherwise, and although he did not intend to let them know at that time, who he was, still he was willing that they should know he believed in the true God and feared him.

When Joseph had said this to his brother Benjamin, his feelings excited him toward his brother and they quite overcame him; so that he was obliged to leave the room quickly; yet he was very happy to see him: but he did not think it was best to let even Benjamin know at that time, who he was. He composed himself, therefore, as soon as he could; washed his face, returned to the room, and gave orders to have the dinner served.

The way this was done, would strike us as singular. You may think, that Joseph would have taken his seat at the same table with them; and placed his brother Benjamin, whom he loved so much, by his side; but instead of that, Joseph took his dinner alone, because the customs of the Egyptians, as we are told, did not allow their rulers, or their

The dinnera peculiar custom.

priests to take their meals in other company.* There were Egyptians also present, and they ate by themselves; because they would not eat with strangers or have any social intercourse with the people of another country. Some suppose, they had a religious dislike to eat with the Hebrews, because the Hebrews ate animals which they revered. But the thing, which they wondered at most, was, the way in which Joseph had them seated at the table. Reuben, the oldest, was seated first, and then the others, according to their ages, to Benjamin the youngest. They could hardly think this happened by accident, and yet they did not know how the governor of Egypt could know their ages. They did not suspect that the governor, whom the Egyptians called Zaphnath Paaneah, was their own brother Joseph.

You must remember, that several of Joseph's brethren were very nearly of the same age; and among grown-up men, who are about the same age, it is sometimes impossible for any but near relations to tell who is the oldest. This circum-

*Mr. Barrow informs us, of a similar custom among the Chinese. They apportion food to each person, according to his rank, and the honor due him; not according to his wants. The mess the emperor apportioned to Lord Macartney, the ambassador, whom Mr. Barrow accompanied, was five times as great as that of any other person in his suite, when he dined at the court at Zhe-hol. The emperor had a table laid for himself, and there was a table laid for every two guests. During the repast, he sent several dishes from his own table to his European guests.

Joseph sends

gifts or messes.

stance also shows you the distinction which was given in those early times to older brothers, over the younger. After Joseph had seated them in this way, he sent to them gifts, or as some think, messes from his own table; but the gift or mess he sent to Benjamin was five times larger than the gifts or messes of the others.

Some think, the design of Joseph was to show greater honor to Benjamin, than to his other brothers; and others think, that he gave Benjamin more than the others, because he was his own brother and he loved him more. Perhaps Joseph had another motive. You remember his brethren were envious of him, because his father gave him a beautiful coat; and perhaps he wished to find out, in this way, whether they had the same bad disposition still; especially toward Benjamin. If they had, they would be very likely to show it in their looks, and perhaps, even by their words: for you will remember, they thought Joseph could not understand them, when they conversed together. But Joseph did not perceive any bad feeling toward Benjamin, or any unkind word:—so far from it, they all enjoyed the entertainment very much. This was a sign, that they had become better and more sensible men, than when they were weak and wicked enough to envy and hate him, on account of his coat. Joseph must have remarked this, with great

Joseph devises

a new plan.

satisfaction ; while it made it more difficult for him to conceal his true character. In the mean time he laid a plan, by which he would certainly find out whether they truly loved Benjamin and their aged father. The plan was, to make it appear, as if Benjamin was a thief, who deserved to be kept in Egypt and punished. By this plan, Joseph would know whether his older brothers would have any feeling for Benjamin, if he should appear to be a wicked man ; or whether they would leave him without sorrow in Egypt, and go on their journey to Canaan. You remember they were so unconcerned when they had put Joseph into the pit, that they quietly sat down to eat their meal, as if they had done nothing wrong. Joseph would also find out in this way, whether they had any regard for their father.

After the dinner was over, the fears of Joseph's brethren were, no doubt, quite removed. The same day, they bought the corn they came for ; and by Joseph's order it was put into their sacks,—as much as they could carry. Their plan was to set off the next morning, very early, for their home. Joseph gave orders also, to have the money each brought, put into his sack, as he did when they came the first time. But he did something else : He gave orders to put his silver cup* into the sack

* This place shows, that the Egyptians had drinking vessels

Joseph's motive for

restoring their money.

of Benjamin. These orders he gave to the steward, or chief servant, who did every thing precisely as Joseph commanded.

Some of you may wish to inquire, why he had their money put back. Perhaps we cannot answer with certainty. But some persons think Joseph did it to prevent his older brethren from suspecting that Benjamin had really taken the cup; for when they found they had their money again, which they would know they had not stolen, they would also believe that the cup had got into the sack of Benjamin, in some way, without his fault. This is the most probable explanation I know of; because Joseph certainly could not wish to have his brethren believe that Benjamin was a thief; though it was a part of his plan, to make him appear to be a thief, until the real truth should come out.

made of metal, in these early times, that is, more than 3500 years ago; and it is another proof, that they had made great progress in the arts. In the time of Julius Cæsar, nearly 1650 years after the time of Joseph, the Germans and Gauls used the horns of oxen for drinking cups. The Jews also, in the time of Samuel and David, used the horns of animals to contain liquids, (1 Sam. xvi. 1, 13; 1 Kings i. 39.) Indeed the arts necessary to the convenience and comfort of life among the Israelites, must have been very little understood even during the reigns of Saul and David; because, at the beginning of Saul's reign, there was no smith found in Israel, but all the Israelites went down to the land of the Philistines to sharpen their plough-shares, coulter, axes, and mattocks. (1 Sam. xiii. 19, 21.) And Solomon, when building the temple, was obliged to get workmen from Tyre. (1 Kings vii. 13, 14.—v. 6; 2 Chron. ii. 7, 8.) This was 480 years after the Israelites came out of Egypt, (1 Kings vi. 1,) or about 700 years after the occurrence above mentioned.

The brethren

overtaken.

The next morning early, the brethren were allowed to set out on their journey. No doubt they felt very happy, for they had Simeon and Benjamin with them. Every thing had happened as they wished, and promised a happy return to their homes. It would have been very natural for them to talk about the excellent entertainment they had the day before, and the friendly manners of Zaphnath Paaneah, the lord of the land. But Joseph did not oversleep himself that morning; for very soon after his brothers had left the city on their journey home, he called his chief servant and told him to pursue them, and when he had overtaken them, say these words to them: "Why have ye repaid evil for good? Is it not that, in which my lord drinks, and by which he practices divination? * Ye have acted wrongly in doing this thing." The faithful servant set off in pursuit immediately, and it is not probable he went alone; for if he had, they might have overpowered him and gone on their way. He soon overtook them and accused them in the very words which Joseph had told him

* Some learned men suppose that Joseph's object, in giving this direction to his chief servant, was to give his brethren a reason for his having missed the cup so soon; because it was the custom, they say, for the superstitious Egyptians of high rank, to consult their divining cups early in the morning, before entering on their occupation for the day, in order to ascertain what their success or fortune would be during the day. If there was such a custom, and the brethren of Joseph were acquainted with it, they would naturally suppose, that he rose early to consult his cup, and not finding it, suspected them and sent men immediately after them.

The answer ofJoseph's brethren.

to use. Joseph had told him what to say, for fear the steward would let out the secret; for the steward himself had put the cup into Benjamin's sack, though it is not probable that he knew Benjamin was Joseph's brother.

You observe that Joseph did not tell the steward to charge them outright with having stolen his cup, and some persons think, that Moses omitted a part of what Joseph really did say. But the truth was, the cup was not stolen, and it was not necessary to the plan of Joseph, that he should say any thing more than what Moses has recorded; for his object was to find out whether his older brothers really did love Benjamin and their father.

The joy of the brethren at their happy departure, was soon damped by this accusation of the steward. Yet they answered him with composure. Nothing makes men feel more at ease, than a good conscience. Consciousness of innocence gives courage. But it is quite otherwise with a man or a boy, who has done something wrong, even although it has not been found out: he fears every trifle, and can hardly speak, without betraying his guilt.

One of the brethren answered the steward in this way—"Why speaketh my lord thus? It would be unworthy of thy servants to do the like! Behold the money which we found in our sacks, we brought back out of the land of Canaan; how

They proposea search.

then, should we steal silver or gold out of the house of thy master? He, of thy servants, with whom it is found, shall die, and we will become my lord's bondmen."

You see, by this, that men reasoned in those days, just as we should reason now. They endeavored to convince the steward, they were honest men, because they had put themselves to the trouble of bringing back the money which was put into their sacks by mistake before, and they wished him to believe, that if they were honest enough to do that, they would not be guilty of stealing a cup from his master, who had treated them so generously the day before. Then they offered to submit to be searched, and abide the severest consequences. The steward took them at their word, only with this difference; that they should not be treated so severely, as they proposed. The steward said, "Be it according to your words"—with this difference, that "he only, with whom it is found, shall be my bondman; but ye, that is, the rest of you shall be guiltless." After the matter was thus arranged, they laid their sacks on the ground, and allowed the steward to search as long as he chose. The steward began with Reuben, who was the oldest, and did not search Benjamin's sack until the last. The steward knew all the time, that the cup was in Benjamin's sack; and you may think it

The cup foundwith Benjamin.

strange, he took so much trouble to search all their sacks, before he searched the right one. Perhaps it was to prevent them from suspecting, that he knew any thing about the matter. If he had opened Benjamin's sack first, they might have suspected it was a trick of the steward, or of some one else, to get them into trouble.

When the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, they rent their clothes. The meaning of this action has already been explained. This shows that they were greatly distressed. Instead of pursuing their journey homeward, as Joseph perhaps feared they would, and as they might, according to the terms the steward proposed—they all put their sacks of corn upon the backs of the asses, and sorrowfully returned with Benjamin to the city. They never so much as thought of leaving him in Egypt, while they returned; but like true brethren, they all stood by each other in this new trouble. They made no attempt to resist or escape from, or deceive, or bribe the steward. They knew very well, that Benjamin was not guilty of stealing the cup, any more than he or they were guilty of stealing the money, which the steward must have found in searching for the cup. But they feared, innocent as they were, that they would all be made slaves, and this no doubt, gave them very great distress.

CHAPTER X.

Judah's

conduct.

THE Bible does not inform us how Benjamin behaved, or what he said, when he appeared to be a thief. But you can try to imagine, how you would feel, if you were in a strange country, and were taken up for stealing a thing, that you did not know you had, which perhaps you had never seen, and yet that very thing was found in your pocket.

You remember, that Judah had made a promise to his father to restore Benjamin, and he felt particularly bound to act, with his best skill, and the greatest earnestness, on this occasion. Judah and his brethren, therefore, went directly to the house of Joseph, and found him at home. As soon as they came into his presence, they prostrated themselves on the ground before him ; thus fulfilling the dream of Joseph again. This was a very affecting sight, and it is wonderful, that Joseph should have the power to control himself any longer. But Joseph, while he was pious, benevolent, and intelligent, was also a calm and practical man. He had an important question to determine, before he could decide, whether it would be prudent for him to bring his brethren to live near him in Egypt.

Joseph's assumed

severity.

He knew, he could more safely rely upon the actual trial of the character and feelings of his brethren, in the way he was going on, than upon any thing they would say to him, if he had let them know who he was, when they first came down to Egypt. Joseph did not mean by any thing he did to his brethren, to punish them for their cruel treatment of him. This is plain, because what he did, brought his own brother Benjamin into the greatest trouble and shame; yet you remember, Benjamin was a very little boy, and was at Hebron, with his father, when the elder brethren of Joseph treated him so badly. If Joseph had intended to punish his brethren, he would have made those of them suffer the most, who had treated him the worst. Now I will return to the story.

When Joseph's brethren fell before him on the ground, instead of giving vent to his feelings, he spoke sternly to them—"What deed is this, that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?" He meant to say, what did you mean by acting in this way. You were very foolish, as well as wicked to do so. Did you think that I should not inquire into the deed, and trace it to you?

Now you should observe the very words of Joseph on this occasion. He did not say to his brothers, that he practiced divination; but he said,

The reason of hisharsh language.

do you not know that *a man like me* (or such a man as I am) practices divination? It was true that men *like* him, or men who were what he appeared to be, that is, Egyptians of high rank, practiced divination. Joseph knew, as I told you before, that the art of the magicians and diviners was very foolish; and that no person could find out any thing in that way; nor is it reasonable to suppose, he would be guilty of such a wicked and senseless practice. It was a part of Joseph's plan, as I have already told you, to appear, talk, and act before them, as an Egyptian officer would; because they took him to be an Egyptian, and in no way related to them.

We have now come to one of the most beautiful and affecting passages in the whole story; but we shall not be able to perceive how beautiful and affecting it is, unless we stop to think over some of the things of which we have spoken already. We have just seen how happily they set out in the morning to go to their homes, and how soon they were overtaken by the steward, and hurried back to the city, into the presence of Joseph. They were all charged with a very disgraceful crime. They could not prove that they were innocent, although they knew they were so, and they had offered to the steward of Joseph to become slaves, if the cup was found upon any one of them; and

The brethren

despair.

the cup was found to their amazement with Benjamin. They felt that their condition was desperate. They did not think of their father or their home, or even of the milder terms proposed by Joseph's steward, but gave themselves up as lost. They remembered their crime, in selling Joseph, some twenty-two years before, whom they had never heard of since, and they felt that God, was now about to punish them in the same way they had treated Joseph. None of them said a word, but Judah, and all that he said in reply to Joseph, in the first place, was this :—" Ah, my lord, what shall we say? What shall we speak, and how shall we justify ourselves? God has determined the punishment of thy servants. Here we are; bondmen to my lord, we as well as he, with whom the cup was found."

Judah did not mean by this, to confess that any of them were guilty of stealing the cup: for he does not say, that " we, as well as he *who took the cup*, will be bondmen; but only he, *with whom the cup was found*. Perhaps he suspected it was a plan to entrap them, but he did not say so. Yet if it was, he thought that God had permitted it, and brought them into these circumstances, to punish them for their former wickedness.

When Joseph saw how they despaired of ever seeing their homes, and their father again, he offered to console them, by saying, that he would not

Joseph's

proposal.

be so unjust as to punish the innocent with the guilty. It would be unworthy of him, he said, to act thus. He told them that only the man with whom the cup was found, should be his bondman, and the rest, might go in peace to their father.

This answer was calculated to convince Judah that it was not Joseph's plan to make them *all* slaves, if he suspected it was before. And it is remarkable, that Joseph expressed himself in the same way that Judah did, about the cup: for Joseph did not say, the man who *took the cup* should be his bondman, but the man with *whom the cup was found*. Joseph knew all the time, that neither of them took the cup. You remember it was put into Benjamin's sack, by his order. This answer of Joseph was the saddest thing they had yet heard. Before, they were all willing to go into slavery, but what Joseph had just said, made them fear that Benjamin would be separated from them, and kept alone in slavery. This touched Judah very deeply; for you recollect, he was surety for Benjamin's safe return. Judah then respectfully stepped forward toward Joseph, and made one of the most beautiful and affecting speeches that can be found in any book.* It quite overcame Joseph's fortitude, and he could hold out no longer.

* Learned men think that Judah was at this time about forty-eight years old.

He begs pardonfor his boldness.

I will now repeat his speech to you, but in somewhat different words from those you find in the English Bible, because in this way, I hope you will understand it better, when you read it for yourselves.

Judah having come near Joseph, so that he could plead with him more earnestly, and get nearer to his heart, spoke thus: "Pardon, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art, even as Pharaoh."

This beginning of his speech was very respectful, and it was very proper; for it was necessary to excuse himself for speaking at all, after Joseph had given his judgment in the case. This was what he meant, when he said, "Thou art even as Pharaoh." Joseph was like Pharaoh, because there was no one who could set aside the punishment he had decreed, and Judah begged Joseph's pardon, for asking *him* to do so. Then he went on to tell Joseph how it happened that Benjamin came down to Egypt at all.

"We said unto my lord, we have an old father, and he has a younger son, the child of his old age, whose brother is dead. He alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him. Thou said'st unto thy servants, Bring him down to me, that I may set my eye upon him. We said unto my lord,

Reminds Joseph

of his promise

the lad cannot leave his father; he would die. But thou said'st unto thy servants, except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall not appear again in my presence."

Here you observe, that Judah reminds Joseph that they would not have brought Benjamin down at all, if he had not required them to do so, and some persons think that he meant also to remind Joseph that he promised to be kind to Benjamin. But you do not remember any such promise, and you may be at a loss to make it out, from any thing Joseph did say.

I will explain this matter to you. Some time ago, I told you that the Hebrews had a peculiar way of expressing their meaning. In this first part of Judah's speech, there is one of their peculiar expressions, which we call a Hebraism. What do you think Joseph meant by *setting his eye upon* Benjamin?

All. He meant, he wished to see him.

Yes, he meant that, and as some learned men think, he meant more. A learned Jewish commentator says, it means "I will take care of him." If you will turn to Jeremiah xxiv. 6, you will find this expression—"I will set my eyes on them for good;" and in Amos ix. 4, you will find the expression—"I will set my eyes on them for evil and not for good." Now the learned commentator I

To be good to

Benjamin.

spoke of says, that this expression is never used, except to express good or evil intentions.* And when Judah reminded Joseph that he had used these words, he meant, that Joseph had promised to look on Benjamin for good. He would have been insincere, if he had meant evil; and if he had said so plainly, they never would have brought Benjamin down. Besides, what reason could Joseph have for saying, he would look upon a youth, like Benjamin, whom (as Judah supposed) he had never seen, with an eye for evil? If this was Judah's meaning, it was a very delicate way of reminding Joseph of his promise to be good to Benjamin; and that would be a reason, why he should deal gently with him in his present unhappy condition.

Having repeated to Joseph, what had taken place between them, when they came down the first time, Judah proceeded to tell Joseph what

* We may use the word *eye* in English, pretty much in the same way, and perhaps we copied this way of speaking from the Hebrews. Thus we may say, that "most men have *an eye* to their own advantage." "Police officers ought to keep a *strict eye*, a *watchful eye*, a *vigilant eye* upon suspicious persons." We may use the word *eye*, in the sense of aspect, regard, respect, view, notice, observation, vigilance, watch, opinion, as well as to signify the organ of sight. Many idioms of the Hebrew language, have been introduced into our own, in consequence of the general use of the Bible in England and the United States. The word *eye* originally signified *egg*, and the eye (or organ of sight) was so called, from the resemblance of the eye-ball to the egg. Hence the nest of a hawk or an eagle was termed her *eyry*, that is, the place where she deposited her eggs.

Jacob's reluctanceto part with Benjamin.

took place between them and their aged father, when they returned to Canaan. He said—

“Now, when we came up unto thy servant, my father, we related to him, the words of my lord.” Our father said, “Go again, buy us a little food.” But we said, we cannot go down; if our youngest brother be with us, then we will go down: for we cannot appear in the man’s presence, unless our youngest brother be with us. Then thy servant, my father, said to us—“ye know that my wife bore me two—the one went out from me, and I said, assuredly he is torn in pieces; for hitherto I have not seen him. Now ye will take this also from me. If mischief should happen to him, ye will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.”

You must remember, that all this was new to Joseph. He had never heard of his father, so far as we know, from the time he left Hebron to go to Shechem, until his brethren came to Egypt the first time to buy corn. And Judah was the first, who told him, how his father accounted for his not returning. Joseph must have known by this, that his brethren did not tell his father the truth; but he could not know from Judah’s words, in what way they deceived him.

But Judah said enough to let Joseph know, that his father thought he was dead, and that Benjamin

He fears for thelife of Jacob.

was now as much beloved by his father as he was: for after relating what his father said about his two most cherished sons, Judah went on to tell Joseph how much he feared for the life of his father. He continued,

“Now, therefore, when I come to thy servant, my father, and the lad be not with us—as his life is bound up in the lad’s life—it will come to pass that he will die, when he seeth the lad is not with us. Thus thy servants, will bring down the gray hair of thy servant, our father, in sorrow to the grave.”

This part of Judah’s speech touched Joseph’s heart; for he loved his father almost, if not quite as tenderly, as his father loved him; and, no doubt, he had had many anxious and sorrowful thoughts about him. Judah did not expect that Benjamin would be set free for nothing, and he did not ask that. He asked only that Joseph should take him for his slave in Benjamin’s place. The reason he gave for his request, was, that he had promised his father to be surety for Benjamin. His conduct at this time, shows how much he regarded his promise. But I do not suppose this was the only reason Judah had; for he thought his father would bear the loss of him better than the loss of Benjamin. He loved Benjamin also, and thought, perhaps, he could bear the condition of slavery better than Benjamin

Judah proposes to takeBenjamin's place.

could. It may be also that, as he was the brother who proposed to sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites, he thought it would be more just that he should be punished in this way, than Benjamin, who was entirely innocent of that crime. Judah's words signified as much as this:

"But thy servant became surety for the lad to my father; I said to him, 'If I bring him not again to thee, I will bear the blame for ever.' Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant remain, instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord; but let the lad go up with his brethren."

This exchange, he thought Joseph could not object to, because he would be worth as much or more, as a bondman, than Benjamin. He implored him to consent to it, out of pity to his aged father, who would die, if Benjamin did not return, and out of pity to his brothers, who would be sorrowful all their lives, if they should be the means of their father's death, and out of pity to himself, who had pledged his filial reverence to his father for Benjamin's safety; for, said he, "how can I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? How can I behold the evil that shall befall my father?"

These last words of Judah are very powerful, and they show the greatest distress of mind. They signify as much as if he had said: "Rather than return to my father, without Benjamin, and see his

Joseph's mind

greatly agitated.

anguish at this new sorrow, I will stay here and be reduced to the lowest condition, among the proud Egyptians, who are so unkind to strangers. I will submit to be a slave, and endure any suffering, if I can redeem my brother Benjamin, save my father's life and escape the sight of the dreadful misery with which your sentence threatens him."

These words of Judah were well calculated to affect the feelings even of a stranger; as he took Joseph to be. But Joseph was Judah's own brother; he understood the words perfectly, as soon as Judah uttered them, before the interpreter explained them, and he felt as much for his aged father as Judah did. Tears came into his eyes, when he thought of the hoary head of his father, and of his cheeks furrowed with the tears he had shed for his long lost Joseph; the first born of his much loved Rachel. He could think of his father, only as an afflicted old man, on the brink of the grave, and at that very moment, anxious and perhaps standing at the door of his tent and looking out for the return of Benjamin, who, he thought, was the only remaining son of his best beloved wife. Joseph's mind was greatly agitated by such thoughts.

Now I wish you to think a little about the trial that Joseph subjected himself to. Before his brethren, he appeared stern and severe, yet his

Is convinced oftheir affection.

heart was full of tenderness to them, all the while ; for when Reuben first spoke of their crime against him, not supposing that Joseph understood him, he turned his face aside to hide his tears. (Gen. xlii. 24.) As soon as Benjamin appeared, he was so overcome, that he was obliged to leave the room. (Gen. xliii. 30.) But now, his love to them, which he had kept pent up in his breast, is ready to break out, in spite of him, and there was no occasion for him to conceal himself under his Egyptian name and dress any longer. I told you one of Joseph's objects was to find out, whether his older brothers loved Benjamin ; or whether they were as wicked and unfeeling toward Benjamin as they were toward him, when they stripped him of his coat and put him into the pit at Dothan. If he had found they were so, it is not improbable that he intended to keep Benjamin in Egypt, protect him, take care of him, and find means to bring his father down to Egypt ; but he saw, that they loved Benjamin and their father too. In particular, he found that Judah loved Benjamin and his father so much, that he was willing to be a slave in order to redeem Benjamin.

Joseph did not expect they would show such strong affection ; if he had, it is probable he would have contrived to be alone with his brethren, when he was ready to let them know, that he was their own brother. There were some Egyp-

Orders the Egyptiansout of the room.

tians present at the time, and he did not wish them to see, what he was going to do. As soon, therefore, as Judah had got through speaking, and while he was yet standing near Joseph, and hoping perhaps to hear him say, that he would let Benjamin go, and take him for a slave in Benjamin's place, Joseph spoke out in a loud voice, "Let every man go out from me." He said this in the Egyptian language, and meant it only for the interpreter and the other Egyptians who were in the room. They were probably much surprised at such a command, because they did not know what Joseph was going to do. And Joseph's brethren would probably be much surprised to see all the Egyptians leaving the room suddenly, at Joseph's bidding, because they did not know why the Egyptians should not stay longer, as well as they. Perhaps they were frightened, and thought the Egyptians left the room for some bad purpose. But it was perfectly natural for Joseph to wish to be alone with his brethren, when he made himself known to them; and besides, he did not wish to speak of their bad conduct toward him, before the Egyptians. Perhaps some of the Egyptians present, did not know that Joseph was a Hebrew, or that he had been a slave, and if they did not, there was no reason why he should tell them.

As soon as the Egyptians had left the room, and

Joseph makeshimself known.

before they got out of hearing, Joseph cried out to his brethren in the Hebrew language, "I am Joseph. Doth my father yet live?" The words of Moses are, "he gave his voice in weeping," by which he meant that Joseph gave his voice utterance in weeping, or that he wept, while he spoke. We cannot imagine any thing that would surprise them more. They had thought of him only as Zaphnath Paaneah, a great Egyptian lord, who could not speak their language. They saw him surrounded with many high officers, all obeying him, as soon as he spoke. No doubt he wore rich and costly clothes and lived in a splendid house: how much then, were they amazed to hear him say, that he was Joseph, the brother whom they had stripped of his beautiful boy's coat, and sold, as a naked slave, to the Ishmaelites, twenty-two years before! They then saw for the first time how God had brought to pass the dream Joseph had told them about the sheaves, which made them so angry at him. But they could not believe it was true; nor could they answer a word; they were so astounded at his presence.

Think now of Judah; he was expecting nothing better than to be accepted as a slave in the place of Benjamin, and to be sent out to do hard work in the fields. But instead, he gets for his answer "I am Joseph, the own brother of Benjamin, for

Tries to removetheir fears.

whom you have been imploring mercy;—I am Joseph, whom you spoke of, just now, as dead. My true name is not Zaphnath Paaneah, as you suppose; that is my Egyptian name—but I am not an Egyptian—I am Joseph, your brother.” Joseph’s brethren did not seem even then to believe him, so he said to them, “Come near me, I pray you.” By this time, they had recovered a little from their astonishment, and they went up toward him; then Joseph gave them a proof that he was their brother, which they could not disbelieve; for he told them a secret, which they had carefully kept among themselves twenty-two years; which even Benjamin did not know. This proved to them that he really was Joseph; because nobody, but they and he, knew that they had sold him as a slave. He said, “I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.” Then he tried to remove their fears, by talking very kindly to them.

“Be not grieved,” said he to them, “nor be angry with yourselves, because ye sold me hither; for God sent me before you to preserve life.” Then he told them something about the famine, which they did not know before. He said that there were five years yet to come, in which there would be neither ploughing nor harvest. By this we know how old Joseph was, at this time. He was about seventeen years of age, when he was sold as a slave

Joseph tries to make themforget their misconduct.

to the Ishmaelites. He was Potiphar's slave and in prison about thirteen years. The seven years of plenty and two of famine had gone by. Now add all these numbers, 17 and 13 and 7 and 2, how many do they make?

All. Thirty-nine years.

Then Joseph was about thirty-nine years old, when he made himself known to his brethren. He had been twenty-two years in Egypt, and he had been the first officer under Pharaoh, about nine years. Observe now, that Joseph said in the five years to come, there would be no ploughing; for this is the meaning of the word, which Moses uses. You remember what I told you about the Nile; how it overflows its banks. This expression of Joseph makes me think that the famine was in some way connected with the river. The people knew there would be no use in ploughing if the Nile did not overflow its banks at all; or if the overflow continued too long. Joseph perhaps foresaw, that the state of the Nile would be such during all the years of famine, that all the Egyptians would see there would be no use in ploughing.

Joseph said other kind words to his brethren, and tried to make them forget the evil they had done him, and see only the finger of God in the whole matter. After he told them about the famine, he said to them: "God sent me before you

Joseph discloses

his plan.

to preserve for you an existence on the earth and save your lives by a great deliverance. Now then: not you sent me hither, but God. He has made me as father to Pharaoh, and as lord of all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.” Then Joseph told them his plan, and what he wished them to do. It was very different from what they feared he would do, a little while before.

Make haste, go up to my father, and say to him, thus saith thy son Joseph, “God hath made me lord of all Egypt—come down to me; delay not, for thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen,* and thou shalt be near me, thou and thy children, and thy children’s children, thy flocks and thy herds, and all that thou hast; and I will nourish thee there.” He told them also to tell his father of all his glory in Egypt and of all they had seen. This then was Joseph’s plan, and he told it to his brethren before they said a word to him. After this, they could not doubt, that he was really their own brother Joseph, nor that he was willing to forgive them all their cruelty to him. After he had told

* It is supposed by some persons, that the Arabian or Cushean shepherds had been driven out of Goshen, but a short time before, and that the land had lain unoccupied until this time. On that supposition this promise of Joseph has been accounted for, and a satisfactory reason may be given for the easy access of the family of Jacob into this most fertile part of Egypt; so that they were not only allowed to sojourn there, but to have the land as a permanent possession. (Gen. xlvii. 27.)

Joseph embraceshis brethren

them his plan, he embraced Benjamin first; then all his other brethren. When he had done that, their astonishment and fear, were quite removed, and they talked with him.

The Bible does not inform us, what they said to each other, and it would be useless for us to conjecture. But there is one expression in this address of Joseph's, which shows how much he loved his father. His first words were, "I am Joseph," and the next were, "doth my father yet live." Judah had just told him, that his father was alive. He did not ask, because he did not believe Judah, but because it was such good news, he wished to hear it again. Some think, that he did not mean to ask the question again, but only to repeat over again to himself, what Judah had told him; just as if he had said, "then my father is really yet alive, how happy I am to hear it." But if he really felt so, some of you may wish to ask, why he did not take pains long before this time to inquire after his father, and send for him.

I once heard a dispute between some boys on this question, and before it was ended, their teacher came up and decided it, to the satisfaction of all. I think it will be interesting to you to know, what boys of your age could say upon such a question, and I will therefore tell you what they said, and what their teacher said, as nearly as I can recollect.

Joseph's sincerity

called in question.

The names of the boys were Charles, Ernest, John, Frederick and William. Their teacher's name I need not mention. When he came up, the boys told him of their dispute, and he asked Charles, who took the wrong side of the question, why he thought Joseph did not care much about his father and brothers.

Charles. Because he never made any inquiry about them during the twenty years and more, he had been away from them. I cannot see how one person can love another, and yet, let so much time go by, without taking the trouble to inquire whether he is alive and well. If Joseph had loved his father, I should think he would have sent somebody to Canaan long before, to let his father know that he was alive, and where he was, and how he fared. It is plain to my mind that Joseph must have forgotten his friends, or if not, it was all one to him, whether he ever saw them or not, because he kept still so long.

Teacher. I must confess Charles, you seem to have plausible grounds for accusing Joseph. As you represent the matter, Joseph does appear to have been in fault, yet, if you reflect a little more about his situation, I think you will change your mind. But I should like to know, what Ernest has to say.

Ernest. I believe Joseph did not send a messen-

Joseph's silence

explained.

ger to Canaan to his father, because he durst not. He was afraid to let his father know that he was alive; because then the whole truth about his brothers' selling him, would have come out; and his brothers would have been severely reprov'd by their father. Then they would have hated Joseph still more, and done something a great deal worse to him; for his father would certainly have brought Joseph back again. I think, therefore, that Joseph kept still because he was afraid.

Teacher. Now John, what have you to say about Joseph's long silence?

John. I think that Joseph could not send any body from Egypt to his father and brothers, because they were constantly moving from place to place, and he could not know where they would stop, and so he could not send to them.

Teacher. Now, William, what have you to say?

William. I asked Charles, how he knew that Joseph did not send several times to his father during this long period. He might have done so, and Moses may have left it out of the history. It may be, too, that Joseph did all he could, but was prevented from getting the information to him in some way, that we do not know of.

Teacher. Well, boys, you have thought a good deal upon this question, and have found out several things that tend to explain, if not quite excuse the

His situationdescribed.

long silence of Joseph. But, William, I do not think it probable that Joseph ever sent any messenger to his father, although it is not at all unlikely, that he often thought about it, and laid many plans for doing it, and so far, you may be right.

We must remember how Joseph was situated, during these twenty years and more. At first, he was a poor slave ; next, he was the head servant of Potiphar ; after that, he was shut up a long time in prison. These various fortunes continued thirteen years. At the beginning, it may be, he would not have dared to send word to his father, (with the hope of being redeemed,) even if he could, for fear of ill treatment from his brothers, and other family quarrels, as Ernest has said. After some time had gone by, it may be, he could not know where to send, because he could not be certain that his father had not removed from Hebron, as John said. Yet, I think he had reason to believe that his father would remain in the neighborhood, and I can hardly think this reason influenced Joseph. A better reason would be, that during all these thirteen years, Joseph had not power, nor money enough to send any one to Canaan. Being a slave, he could not require any one to do any thing for him ; and a mere servant, though not a slave, seldom has money enough to send any one so far ; but

Joseph could not

send to Canaan.

a poor slave in prison certainly cannot be expected to send a special messenger to a foreign country.*

Charles. But, sir, as he was the favorite head servant in Potiphar's house, and had the confidence of his master, could he not have found a servant, or a slave, who could have made the journey for him? One person was enough to send.

Teacher. No, Charles, one man was not enough. The way was lonely and dangerous, on account of bad men and wild beasts. Hardly any thing to eat, could be found on the road. There were no houses of entertainment, such as we have; and for

* Few persons, either young or old, reflect sufficiently upon the advantages they enjoy under our happy institutions, in the present state of knowledge and the arts. Think of the advantages we derive from mails, post, and post offices. Next to a free press, they are the grand underminers of despotic power. This is felt in Europe. But it is in the more confined and humble scenes of social life, that they dispense comfort, and diffuse joy, with a liberality, which we seldom hear sufficiently acknowledged; although to them, the absent parent, child, relative, or friend are often indebted, not only for the removal of anxiety, and the solace of dejection, but often even, as the sole antidote to extreme sorrow. This institution in its improved state, however, is of very modern invention. Posts were first employed in France; but even in that country, there was no letter office or post office, so lately as 1619. The first regular establishment in England, was in A. D., 1635, during the reign of Charles I. In 1683, a private person projected the useful conveyance of letters and small parcels, by the penny post, throughout London and its suburbs. In ancient times, when persons took a long journey, if they wished to send back information, they took tame pigeons with them, to which they fastened their letters, and then let them loose. This custom prevailed also among the Turks, and in several eastern countries. The Dutch employed carrier pigeons in their sieges. Crows also were employed, sometimes, as letter bearers, and Cecinna, a friend of Pompey and Cicero, used to bring up young swallows, and send them as messengers to carry news to his friends.

Other reasonsfor not sending.

these reasons, one man could not travel alone. It was necessary to send several men with asses, or other beasts of burden, to carry whatever they would need by the way. Joseph could not meet the expense, so long as he was a slave or in prison.

Frederick. That is very plain: but why, sir, did he not send several men, during the seven years of plenty, when he was neither a slave, nor a servant, and had plenty of money?

Teacher. I was expecting this question, but you might have asked, Why did Joseph do nothing, not only during the seven years of plenty, but during about two years of famine, which he had reason to believe extended to Canaan, where his father lived; and indeed, not until his brothers actually came to him themselves?

Charles. That is a hard question. Certainly it does not look well in Joseph to be a great rich lord, and prime minister of the greatest king in the world, nine long years, without inquiring after his relations, or sharing his good fortune with them, when he knew, they might be in great want. He ought to have sent for them, as soon as he became a great and rich man; for then he had nothing to fear from his brothers.

Teacher. Very true, Charles; Joseph had nothing to fear from his brothers then; but fear was not the reason why he did not send for them. It is

Prudential

considerations.

true also, that the expense of sending was not a matter of any moment to Joseph, after he became the first lord of Egypt. But as soon as Joseph was raised to this high office, probably he found other difficulties, in the way of his sending to his friends, and of bringing them down to him. Listen now to what I say. In the seven years of plenty, Joseph might have thought thus: "Pharaoh, has made me chief ruler under him, because I interpreted his dreams, and foretold a famine. He, and many of the Egyptians believe, that God has helped me in this matter, and that the years of famine will certainly come. For that reason, he allows me to build store-houses, and take up corn, and manage every thing according to my own will. But so long as the years of famine are delayed, there will be no clear proof that I have rightly interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh. They may think plenty in Egypt, no very wonderful thing.* If, therefore, I should send for my father and his large family, before the years of famine shall come, the Eryp-

* An ancient author informs us, that Ptolemy, (ironically named Philadelphus, because he put to death his own brothers,) raised in Egypt every year near five hundred thousand tons of wheat, or about sixteen millions of bushels. This king succeeded his father, Ptolemy Lagus, 283 B. C., and was one of the most powerful kings of his time. He established a famous library at Alexandria, and collected more than 200,000 volumes. We are told, that by the advice of Demetrius Phalereus, this king ordered the translation of the Bible, from Hebrew into the Greek language, which version is commonly called the Septuagint. It was made about 271 years before Christ.

Other motivesfor not sending.

tians may be envious of me. They may think, too, the interpretation I made of the dreams, a pretence for my own interest, and for the advantage of my relations; and that all I wish, is to make them rich with the king's money. They may set the king against me in this way, and he may turn me out of my office, and my plans to provide against the famine may no longer be observed."

Thoughts like these, may have prevented Joseph from sending for his father and brethren, during the years of plenty; and yet there can be no doubt he greatly desired to have them near him.

Charles. But why did he not bring them down to Egypt, as soon as the years of famine commenced? Why did he remain quiet two whole years, until his brethren actually came to him?

Teacher. It is difficult to answer with certainty, about the particular motives of Joseph. But we can form some probable judgment by the circumstances. I think, however, you may be quite sure that Joseph earnestly desired to be near his father all the time he was in Egypt.

During all the years of plenty, and the two years of famine, which were past, Joseph may have had other weighty reasons for waiting in silence. In all his various fortunes, Joseph had considered with wonder and gratitude the good providence of God. Particularly, he felt that God had been with him,

Joseph duringhis prosperity.

when he explained the dreams of the butler and baker, and of Pharaoh. By his interpretation of these dreams, God had raised him to far greater prosperity than he could have expected. This made him think, no doubt, sometimes of his own dreams, which he had related to his brethren, because these were the occasion of his coming to Egypt. But these dreams, according to the interpretation of his father, foreshowed his exaltation over his brethren, and God himself had already begun to fulfill them, without his doing any thing to bring them to pass.

With deep feeling, Joseph must have reflected often upon his own wonderful history, and the turns of his fortune, under God's guidance. But the complete fulfillment of his dreams required that his father and brethren should come to him, and bow before him, as the sheaves of corn did before his sheaf, and as the sun, moon, and eleven stars made obeisance to him. Might not, then, Joseph have thought within himself thus: "God has begun to fulfill the dreams of my youth, since he has so wonderfully raised me up from slavery and imprisonment to extraordinary power: and God himself will take care to fulfill the rest of my dreams, perhaps in some equally extraordinary way. I know certainly, that sooner or later, I shall see my relations. When this can happen, the All-wise God knows best. I will leave all to him, and wait

Explanationconcluded.

with patience his time.” These, I suppose, are the principal reasons why Joseph did not, of his own accord, send for his father and brethren, after he became the first minister of Pharaoh.

I do not know whether the reasons of the teacher will satisfy you, but they convinced Charles and Frederick, that they had formed an unfavorable judgment of Joseph’s conduct too hastily. Now we will resume the history, as it is contained in the Bible.

CHAPTER XI.

Pharaoh's

orders.

WE left Joseph and his brethren, talking together alone in the room, but so loud, that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh overheard them.

The report was soon noised abroad, that Joseph's brethren had come. Pharaoh himself, and his servants were pleased at the news. This shows that Joseph was very much esteemed by the king, and his great men, and it shows too, that Joseph had conducted himself during the nine years he had been in office, so as to satisfy them. This was a great deal: For men in high places are very commonly found fault with. Perhaps they were pleased for Joseph's sake, because he would be more happy now his brethren were come. It may be, they were pleased also, because they thought Joseph would wish to have them settle in Egypt, and then he would have a greater interest in the country.

Pharaoh desired that the whole family should live in Egypt, and gave orders to Joseph to take measures to bring his father and brethren down. Accordingly, Pharaoh ordered Joseph to say to his brethren—"load your cattle, and go to the land of Canaan. Take your father and your household,

Joseph sends

wagons.

and come to me; for I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land." Then he told Joseph to give them wagons for their little ones, and for their wives, but not for their goods; for he did not wish them to be much concerned about them.

The Jewish doctors inform us, that the Hebrews did not use wheel carriages, or horses, while they were Nomades,* or led a pastoral life; but that their beasts of burden were asses and camels. In Egypt, as I told you some time ago, cars or chariots of different descriptions were known before Joseph's time, and were used in peace and in war. (Exod. xiv. 7; Gen. xli. 43.) The Jewish doctors also tell us, that it was not lawful to take wagons out of Egypt, without the king's command or permission, and for that reason, Pharaoh commanded Joseph to give them wagons. The reason of this law, they say, was to prevent the carrying of corn out of Egypt by wagon loads. But this is doubtful.

You see by this speech of Pharaoh, how it happened that Jacob and his sons came into Egypt. They were not the subjects of Pharaoh before, but they belonged to another country. They were a

* It appears by Judges iv. 2, 3, that Jabin, king of Canaan, had nine hundred chariots of iron, and he lived only fifty-six years after Joshua's death. This was about 270 years after the death of Joseph, or about 325 years after the time we are speaking of, although the time cannot be precisely determined.

Joseph sends wagons toconvey Jacob's family,

small, but independent tribe, and they went to Egypt at Pharaoh's invitation. The king, therefore, had no right to consider them intruders, nor had he any right to keep them there against their will; they had a right to go back again to their own country as soon as they pleased, and he was bound to give them security and protection for their return. While they stayed there, they had the right also to be protected and treated well, if they obeyed the laws of the country, because the king invited them to come, and even sent wagons to bring them down at his own expense. Yet after they had been there a great many years, and another king arose, who knew not Joseph, the descendants of Joseph and his brethren were treated very cruelly, (as you may read in the first chapter of Exodus,) and were made to work, as if they had been the king's slaves.

Now we will return to the story.

The brethren of Joseph did as Pharaoh commanded. Joseph gave them wagons and provisions for their journey. He gave them also changes of raiment. To Benjamin in particular, he gave three hundred pieces of silver. Besides, he sent presents to his father, as much as ten asses could carry and also corn and bread, and food, as much as ten she-asses could carry. The changes of raiment which Joseph gave them, were expressions of his favor

Joseph's gifts

to his brethren

and honor. It is a custom still in eastern countries for rich people to make presents of raiment to persons of distinction, and to others, whom they wish to honor, and the more costly the gift, the greater the honor.

Having received the gifts, they set forth again to return, and Joseph went a little of the way with them, according to a custom which still prevails in the East; and when he parted with them he charged them not to fall out by the way. Perhaps Joseph feared, that they would begin to talk over the kindness he had showed them and the wrong they had done him, and that this might, in some way, lead to disputes and quarrels between them.

When they came near their home, some of them hurried on before the wagons, to tell the happy news to their father. Probably they found him in or near his tent, waiting with anxiety for their return. When he saw Simeon and Benjamin with the others, his fears were all removed, but it was not long, we may easily believe, before they told him that his long lost Joseph was also alive, although he was not with them; because he was governor over all the land of Egypt. This sounded very strangely to Jacob. He did not believe them, and his heart continued cold.

Impossible! he thought; "Joseph has been dead more than twenty years—I saw his bloody coat

Presents sentto his father.

myself. How can it be that he is alive and the governor of Egypt! Impossible! My sons have been imposed upon, or they have deceived themselves. No, no, I cannot believe this news." Some such thoughts as these might have passed through Jacob's mind; but his sons went on to tell him all that Joseph said, and by and by, the wagons arrived and the presents, and when Jacob saw them, his spirit revived.

The Jews have a tradition, that Joseph told his brethren some particular things, which had passed between him and his father, which nobody else knew any thing about: so that Jacob could be sure he was really his son Joseph. But I think it was the sight of the wagons and the presents that convinced Jacob. The wagons, he knew, must have come from Egypt; and he knew that nobody could send them, but some great and rich man, who had great authority, and that nobody would send them, but some person who had a very high regard for him, and was greatly concerned for his comfort.

As soon as Jacob was convinced that the wonderful news was true, he made up his mind, old as he was, to leave the land, which God had given to him, and his home, and go down to Egypt to see his son. His words are very natural, and yet very remarkable: "Enough; Joseph my son, is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die." He did

Jacob's joy

at the news.

not care for any thing but to see him—joy came into his heart for the first time, since he saw the bloody coat, but not on account of Joseph's riches and honors, or because he wanted to be supported by him. All his heart desired, was to see Joseph. It was enough, if he was still alive, and he could have the happiness of seeing him once more.

If you should wish to know whether Jacob did not inquire of his sons how Joseph went to Egypt, and how it happened that his coat was found smeared with blood, I can only say, I do not know; for the Bible does not tell us any thing about it. It is not unlikely, however, that the older sons, told their father, the whole story; for they had repented very sincerely of their wicked conduct toward Joseph, which, however, God had overruled so much to the advantage of all of them. You remember also, that Joseph had spoken to them about it, in the presence of Benjamin, and he would be very likely to tell his father if they did not.

At the command of Jacob, they soon made ready for their journey back to Egypt; and set forth in a long train. Now imagine, how long this train was. At this time, Isaac was dead and Jacob was the patriarch. There were Jacob and his sons and grandsons, and great grandsons, sixty-five persons; besides their wives and daughters.* Then again,

* In the list of Jacob's children and grandchildren, it is remark-

Jacob sets out

for Egypt.

there was a multitude of men servants and maid-servants. Besides these; there were beasts of burden, to carry their goods, and there were large herds of sheep and cattle. Jacob himself, who was now a hundred and thirty years old, and the women and young children, rode in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent. The rest of the company marched slowly along on foot. They went through Beersheba, where they rested. Let us look now for the place on our map. William may find it, and describe its situation.

William. It is south-west of Hebron, and not very far from the desert of Idumea.

Right. It is also about forty-two miles from Jerusalem. You will find this name in Gen. xxi. 31, and the reason why it was given to the place. The word *beer* signifies *well*: and *sheba* signifies *oath* or *seven*. It was the place where Abraham took an oath to Abimelech, that he digged the well. In process of time, there was a considerable town built there; which was taken notice of, by heathen writers, under the name of Berzimmea or Bersabe.

able that there were only two women; his own daughter Dinah, and Asher's daughter Sarah. The children of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, Gad, Dan, Naphthali, Benjamin, were all sons. Judah and Asher had each two grandsons, but none of them had grand-daughters. In this predominance of males, Divine Providence, perhaps, had respect to the intended emigration of Jacob's family, and their settlement in the land of Egypt.

Offers sacrificeson the way.

Now I will explain to you an expression, in which this name several times occurs. (Judges xx. 1; 2 Chron. xxx. 5; 1 Sam. iii. 20.) It is this, "from Dan even to Beersheba." You know where Dan is?

All. Yes, sir; in the north-east part of the land of Israel.

Yes; and Beersheba is in the south-west, so that a person who went from Dan to Beersheba traveled through the greatest length of the land. These words then, "from Dan to Beersheba," are used to signify the greatest length of the land.

Beersheba is about thirty miles from Hebron. It still existed as a town, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and the place still bears, in Arabic, the name Bir-seba. Travelers in our time have found two wells there, and on some low hills, a little north of the wells, they have found the ruins of former habitations extending half a mile in length and a quarter of a mile in breadth. But these, no doubt, are the remains of buildings erected long since Jacob's time. This place, we are told, was strongly fortified by the western Christians, when they were masters of the country, because it was a border town of much importance.

At this place then, as I just told you, Jacob rested, on his way to Egypt, and while he was there he offered sacrifices to the God of his father,

Jacob's doubts

about removing

Isaac. It is not improbable that this good old man began to doubt whether he was doing right in leaving the country which God had given him. (Gen. xxxv. 12,) to go into a foreign country, from which he might never return.

Perhaps he thought he might lose his rights if he left the land of his own accord. He knew without doubt, that God forbade his father Isaac to leave the land, during a time of famine; and he may have been doubtful, whether it was right for him to give way to his strong desire to see Joseph.

But there was another thing which made Jacob think it was a very important business he had undertaken. God had told his grandfather Abraham, that his descendants should be strangers in a land that was not theirs, and that they should be servants and serve them four hundred years. (Gen. xv. 13.) If Jacob knew this, as there can be no doubt he did, he might fear, that he was taking his family into a place of bondage; and this would naturally be a very distressing thought to him; for who would like to move his family into a country where he feared they would be badly treated, and be reduced to the condition of slaves? For all these reasons, Jacob desired that God would direct him in some way that would remove his doubts and fears, if it was right for him to go; or keep him back from going, if it was wrong for him to

Removed by

a vision.

go. For this purpose, as we may reasonably believe, Jacob offered sacrifices and prayers to God at Beersheba.

Jacob having called upon God in this way, God answered him in a vision of the night, and made promises to him, which removed all his fears, so that when Jacob arose, he went on his journey with courage. Perhaps we may learn what Jacob was particularly afraid of, from what God said to him. It was this: "I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt: for a great nation will I make of thee—I will go down* with thee, into Egypt, and I will also assuredly bring thee up again and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

Now, if Jacob feared it was wrong for him to go

*Theologians call such expressions as this, *anthrópomórphisms*, by which they intend any description, employed in the Bible, which represents God by images or actions borrowed from men. Thus the sacred writers speak of God as having *eyes*, (Hab. i. 13,) *ears*, (Ps. xxxiv. 16,) *a mouth*, (Deut. viii. 3,) *as going up*, (Ps. xlvii. 6,) *as going down*, (Exod. xix. 18,) *as sitting down* and *rising up*. This word, *anthropo-morphism*, is formed of two Greek words, the first signifying *man*, and the second *form* or *figure*; so that it is applied to all those expressions which represent God under the form or figure of a man; or as performing such actions as are appropriate to the physical organs of a man. Different reasons have been given why the Scriptures represent God in this way. Philo, a learned Jew of Alexandria, said it was because the ancient Jews were too uncultivated to comprehend any other kind of representation. Others give different reasons. Still we are always to remember that God is a Spirit, (John iv. 24,) and that no one hath seen God at any time, (John i. 18.) He dwelleth not in temples made with hands, (Acts xvii. 24, 29,) and needs not to go from place to place, inasmuch as he is always, every where present.

A further

revelation.

to Egypt, because God did not permit his father, Isaac, to go when he was at Gerar, God gave him to understand that he permitted him to do what he forbade to his father; and God had a right to direct both as he pleased. God assured him also, that his going to Egypt was not contrary to his designs, and would not prevent him from fulfilling the promises he had made to him, because he promised him again, that he would make a great nation of him in that country.

By this Jacob knew, that he and his sons would not return to Canaan, as soon as the famine was over; but would stay there many years, till they became a great nation. If Jacob was afraid of the Egyptians, he knew, by this communication, that God would not permit the Egyptians to kill or destroy his children or grandchildren, but would be with them, and protect and prosper them. God assured Jacob also, that he should not lose the land of promise, by his going to Egypt, because he said, he would bring him and all his descendants back again.

He told Jacob also, that Joseph should survive him. This is plain, because God promised him that Joseph should put his hand on his eyes, when he died, that is, should close them. This is one of the last duties of affection, performed usually by

Jacob

encouraged.

some dear relation, from the earliest times, and the custom is not confined to the Israelites.

Some time ago, I told you that God instructed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in a very remarkable way, and this vision is an example of such instruction. If you will turn to Gen. xxviii. 10, 17.—xxxv. 9, 14, you will find it related, how God appeared to Jacob on other occasions, many years before. And now that God had again instructed him in this remarkable way his mind was quite at ease, because he knew that his journey was agreeable to God's will, and his heart now hastened him forward to see his long lost son, whom he knew by this vision, as well as by the report of his sons to be alive.

But Jacob did not go to the city of On, where it is supposed the king's court was, and where Joseph lived, but he went to Goshen, which some learned men think was that part of Egypt which was nearest to the land of Canaan.* Before he

* Mr. Jacob Bryant wrote a very learned treatise upon the situation of this place, and he fixes it, at the extreme and highest part of Lower Egypt, called Cushan; near the vertex of the Δ Delta. Josephus, he says, makes the general *rendez-vous* of the children of Israel at their departure, to have been at Latopolis or Litopolis, which he calls Letopolis. They journeyed from a city, that was then in ruins, where the Egyptian city of Babylon was afterward built, which was upon the hill of the quarries, close by Latopolis. The next place they came to, according to Josephus, was *Succoth*. (Josephus' Antiq. Book ii. chap. xv.) This Latopolis was west of the Nile and a little farther North than On or Heliopolis. That part of Egypt which was nearest Palestine was desert, and does not correspond at all with the description the Bible gives us of Goshen. So Mr. Bryant says. See the note at the beginning of chapter ix.

Jacob sendsJudah forward.

arrived at that place, he sent Judah before him, to the city, in order to tell Joseph he was on his way; so that he might come to direct his face to Goshen. Joseph was, without doubt, very anxious to see his aged father, after so long a separation, and, therefore, putting aside all business, without delay he harnessed his chariot, and went up to Goshen to meet his father. The Bible makes this part of the story very short, but it is easy to imagine, some of the circumstances of the meeting. Jacob's company was very large, consisting of eleven sons, their wives, his daughter, and his sons' sons, and his grand-daughter, as you may read in Gen. xlv. 8, 26.

Many of these Joseph had never seen, and of course he could not know them, till he was told who they were. They must have looked upon Joseph, in his Egyptian dress and splendor, with wonder; and then the sight of their tents and their herds of cattle, must have brought back to Joseph's mind, the scenes of his boyhood, and almost made him think he was in the land of Canaan again.

But he could not fail to know his father, the moment he saw him, although he was altered by age. When Joseph presented himself to his father, he fell on his neck and kissed him. Jacob's heart was so full, he said to Joseph, "Now, let me die, since I have seen thy face and thou art yet alive."

Joseph returnsto the city.

By this, he did not mean he wished to die, at that very moment; but only that, he could now die contentedly, because he had nothing more to desire in this life. The Bible does not inform us particularly what passed between Joseph and his brethren and their wives and children; nor how long he staid with them, before he returned to the city; but we may reasonably believe, that he spoke with them all, and inquired the names of those he had never seen before, and became a little acquainted with them.

After the interview was over, Joseph left his father and brethren, and the flocks, at the same place, and returned to tell the king that his father and brethren had arrived in Goshen. It was best that he should do this himself; because he was in a peculiar relation to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh himself had ordered Joseph to send for them.

But he told them what he intended to say to Pharaoh about them, and what they should say, if Pharaoh should ask what their occupation was. Joseph's wish was to have them dwell in the land of Goshen, where they then were; because he wished to keep them separate from the Egyptians, and have them continue to follow the business they were used to. Goshen was the best part of Egypt, for their business, and if he could have them settled there, the aversion of the Egyptians to shepherds,

Joseph's interview

with Pharaoh.

would prevent them from mixing with his relations and corrupting them with false notions about religion

Joseph then returned to Pharaoh and said to him: "My father and my brethren, with their flocks and herds, and all that is theirs, are come from the land of Canaan and behold they are in the land of Goshen." You remember that when Pharaoh ordered Joseph to send for his father and brethren, he told him, the best of all the land of Egypt should be theirs, and not to be concerned about bringing their goods.

But now Joseph is careful to mention, that they had brought their flocks and herds and all they had, perhaps for the purpose of letting Pharaoh know they were rich in cattle, and therefore Goshen would be the most suitable place for them to settle in.

It does not appear that Pharaoh made any reply at that time, and Joseph took five of his brethren and presented them to Pharaoh. The Jews have a tradition that these five were, Zebulon, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher ; but I do not think that it is important to know which they were. Pharaoh asked them their occupation, which was a very usual question for kings to address to strangers, presented to them for the first time. They replied—"Thy servants are shepherds, both we and our

Joseph's brethren

before Pharaoh.

fathers." So they gave the king the very answer Joseph told them to give; but as Pharaoh did not immediately tell them to stay in Goshen, they went on to tell him why they had come to Egypt. They did not wish him to think, they had come to settle and stay there always, but only for a time, which is the meaning of the word *sojourn*. They said—We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for thy servants' flocks, as the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. As Pharaoh still did not answer, they went on to ask his permission plainly, to dwell in Goshen. Still Pharaoh did not answer them, but spoke to Joseph in such a way, as to show he knew what they came for, and that he was willing they should stay. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Thy father and thy brethren are come to thee." Perhaps Pharaoh supposed they had heard of Joseph's greatness, and that their motive in coming was to be protected and supported by him, if so, he signified that he was willing they should share in this way, in his good fortune.

But some persons think Pharaoh meant to say to Joseph—"It is thy father and thy brethren that are come to thee. They have strong claims upon you on account of your relationship, to make a liberal provision for them." If this was what Pharaoh thought, then he gave Joseph the full power to do every thing for them his heart could

Pharaoh's answer

to Joseph.

desire;—for he went on to say, “The land of Egypt is before thee, settle thy father and brethren in the best of the land. Let them dwell in the land of Goshen, and if thou knowest men of ability among them, appoint them overseers over my cattle.”

By this you see, that Pharaoh did not confine himself to the request of Joseph's brethren, but gave Joseph full power to settle them in any place he chose; but they might live in Goshen, if they liked that part of Egypt best. This was very generous in the king, and shows how much he liked Joseph.

Perhaps we cannot find out with certainty where the land of Goshen was situated.* Probably it was on the east of the river Nile, because it is nowhere related that Jacob crossed the Nile, in going with his sons to Goshen; nor is it said, that the

* It is supposed by some learned men, that the word Goshen, comes from the Arabic word Gush, which signifies *heart*, or whatsoever is choice and precious. There was a Goshen in the part of Canaan, allotted to the tribe of Judah, (Josh. x. 41; xi. 16; xv. 51,) so called for the same reason. Hence, Joseph recommended this tract of the country as the best of the land, (Gen. xlvii. 11,) and as the fat of the land. (Gen. xlv. 18.) If Goshen was east of the Nile, and near the entrance from Palestine into Egypt, as is commonly supposed, it must have been in ancient times considerably more extensive than it is at present. It is said, that the eastern branches of the Nile have failed considerably since the times we are speaking of—that the main body of the river has been verging continually more and more to the west, and that the channels of the river on the west have been deepening. It is remarkable, that the Greek geographers living at a later period have made no mention of Goshen whatever.

Pharaoh permits

them to settle.

Israelites crossed that river, when they went out of Egypt. It is plain, too, that Goshen was not very far from the Red Sea, and probably it was situated at no very great distance from the city of On, or Heliopolis.

It was a land of seed, figs, vines, pomegranates, cucumbers, leeks, melons, onions, garlic,* (Deut. xi. 10 ; Numb. xx. v ; xi. 15 ;) and it was a good country for raising cattle. Pharaoh himself had flocks, which probably were fed in Goshen, as he was willing to put them under the care of any of Joseph's brethren, who were particularly skillful.

After Joseph had presented his brethren to Pharaoh, and obtained leave to settle them in

*The Hebrews complained in the wilderness that the manna grew insipid, and they longed for the leeks and onions of Egypt. Garlic, it is said, has the greatest strength of all our plants, affords most nourishment, and supplies most spirits to those who eat but little meat. It seems to have been a considerable article of food in ancient times. Homer (as translated by Pope) has these lines—

“Honey new pressed, the sacred flour of wheat,
And wholesome garlic, crowned the savory meat.”

The Spaniards, it is said, use great quantities of garlic. Herodotus says, that sixteen hundred talents of silver were expended in radishes, leeks, and onions for the workmen who built the great pyramid of Egypt, during its construction. This sum is said to be equal to £400,000 sterling. Others calculate it at £289 7s. 6d. sterling. Others, as at least equal to £220,000 sterling. Melons are a species of cucumber, of which there are many varieties in different parts of the world. The sort called *Canteleupe*, is so denominated from a place near Rome, whither it was brought from Armenia. The water-melon seems providentially designed for the wants of those who live in warm climates.

Jacob's interview

with Pharaoh.

Goshen, he brought his aged father to the king, and Jacob *saluted* him. The word usually means *blessed*. The salutation or blessing in ancient times, and still customary in the east, when addressed to a king, consists in a wish for his long life. "May the king live forever;" (1 Kings i. 31; Dan. ii. 4; vi. 7;) while to a private individual, it was usual to say, "Peace to you. The Lord be with you—the Lord bless thee." (Ruth ii. 4.) Pharaoh was struck with Jacob's appearance, and we may infer from his question, "How old art thou?" that Jacob looked very old.

The answer of Jacob is very striking. It was this: "The years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years." Do you know, William Ward, what a pilgrim is?

William. A pilgrim is one who goes wandering about.

Very well; but more particularly we apply this word to a person who travels to a distance from his own country to visit some place, esteemed venerable and sacred,—and a pilgrimage is a long journey to some such place. But that is not the meaning here. These words of Jacob mean, that he had been a wanderer one hundred and thirty years—all the days of his life. In the east they have this saying—"The world is a caravansery, and mankind are a caravan, which never remains

Jacob's hope

of a future life.

at the baiting place." Can you tell me, Benjamin, what caravan and caravansery signify?

Benjamin. A caravan is a great many men traveling together.

We speak of caravans usually in connection with traveling in the east; and it means a company of travelers who may be pilgrims or merchants, traveling in a body through deserts or other dangerous places. Learned men inform us, that the word comes from an Arabic or Persian word, which signifies a *trader* or *dealer*. A caravansery is a stopping place for caravans, where they load, or unload, or stop to rest. It is a kind of inn, having spacious accommodations for caravans. This word also, is said to come from the same Persian or Arabic word, signifying caravan, and another word, (*serai*) which signifies any large house.

Let us go back now to the answer of Jacob. It shows very plainly, that he knew he should live after this life was over, in the world to come. He spoke as though he thought this life was like a passage or road, through which he was traveling to another state of being, in which he was to continue forever. (See Ps. cxix. 54; xxxix. 13.) If we consider how old and infirm Jacob was, and how many sorrows and troubles he had had, we shall see that this answer did not show that he was peevish or fretful; but only that he remem-

Reflections on the

whole ceremony.

bered his many sorrows. Perhaps his sorrows and sufferings actually shortened his life, though he lived seventeen years after this period; and the restoration of Joseph to him, no doubt, made him more happy, and had a good influence on his health. But his grandfather lived twenty-eight years longer, and Isaac, his father, lived thirty-three years longer than he did.

Now let us think a little about the whole ceremony of Joseph's presenting his father and his brethren to the king. It must have appeared very singular to Pharaoh and his great men. They lived in a splendid city, and in splendid houses, and were surrounded with the riches of Egypt, and were dressed according to their own fashion. But Joseph's brethren were plain men; they were dressed like herdmen, and so was their aged father. Think now, if you can, how they appeared in the hall of a splendid palace, by the side of the king and his nobles. Think too, how differently they must have appeared from Joseph in his Egyptian dress.

But Joseph was not so wicked or so foolish as to be ashamed of his relations, nor did he think their employment disgraceful to him or them, although God in his providence had exalted him so much above them, in worldly grandeur. So far from it, Joseph felt it an honor to present his

The follyof pride.

brethren, and especially his beloved father to the king. In this, Joseph showed not only his piety, but his excellent good sense.

It has often happened, for one of several sons and brothers to be raised above all the rest of his family by becoming very rich, or by being appointed to some high office ; but such fortunate sons have not always felt and acted as Joseph did. Sometimes they are ashamed of their relations, and do not like to be seen with them, or have it known who their relations are, and never speak of them if they can avoid it. This is very foolish ; for in spite of all they can do, their relations will be known ; and it is worse than foolish—it is wicked. For God made them one family, and he made the differences between them. Still he requires it of the son, whom he promotes, (Ps. lxxv. 6, 7,) or to whom he gives riches or other worldly distinctions, to honor his father and mother, and to love his brothers and sisters, and not only to acknowledge them before others, but to be kind to them, and do them good.

If you are studious and virtuous, and careful to improve your advantages, it may happen in a few years, that some of you, who have good talents, may find yourselves by God's kindness, very much higher in the world than your relations, and very much higher than the indolent sons of fortune. Why should it not be so ? What greater advan-

Fraternal

duties.

tages can the richest man in the United States give his sons than the founder of this college designed you should have here? It is not probable, however, that any of you will get so high in the world as Joseph did. Yet if it should happen that you should get riches, or honor, or great learning, remember the conduct of Joseph, and do as he did. Don't be ashamed of any one whom God has made your kindred. You should honor and respect them, lend them a helping hand if they should need it, and try to raise them to equality with yourselves. You should not be like those proud and foolish men who think it a disgrace to have it known that they were once poor and humble themselves, and have relations still in that condition. Poverty is no mark of disgrace, unless it comes from vicious conduct; nor do riches change a man, though they may change his manners. You should think thus: "I ought to be just the same to my brothers and sisters, as if I were poor, and did not know any more than they. They are my brothers and sisters still, and will be so as long as we live. I owe it to the good providence of God, that I am better in my worldly condition than they, and it is his will that I should be dutiful to my mother, and love my brothers and sisters, and do all for them I can; and it shall be my happiness to do so. I will never be

Pride

a wicked feeling.

ashamed of them so long as they are virtuous, and do nothing they need to be ashamed of."

If you think and act in this way, it will be very honorable to you. Pride is a wicked feeling in every form which it takes, but it is detestable when it puts out the natural affections. There is less excuse for pride, if possible, in our happy country, than in some others, where distinctions of birth or caste, are often reckoned of greater importance than distinctions of conduct. Here, all stand upon the footing of equality, except so far as virtuous conduct, or learning, or talents, or successful industry, or the various prosperity which God in his providence bestows, makes a difference. Before the law all are equal, and in the sight of God they are so too: for he has made all men of one blood.* Yet he requires most of those to whom he gives most advantages. You should strive to gain those

* Equality as relating to civil privileges, religious liberty, and impartial laws, is interwoven with the gospel itself. Milton truly says—

"God gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but man over men
He made not lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free."

The constitution of Pennsylvania declares, "that all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent and indefeasible rights;" "that all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences;" "that no human authority can in any case whatever control or interfere with the rights of conscience."—Such is the spirit of the American constitutions in general.

Filial and

fraternal duties.

distinctions which useful learning, superior merit, and strictly virtuous conduct make; and if you should succeed in getting higher in the world than others, by better talents, better instruction, or greater success in business, remember that you are accountable to God for the use you make of these advantages; remember also, that he requires you to employ them for his glory, and in doing good to your fellow creatures. Especially should you remember your mothers, brothers and sisters and relations, and treat them with the greatest kindness, and by no means be ashamed to acknowledge them before the greatest men in the world. Joseph, you see, was not ashamed to present his brothers, rustic and unpolished as they were, and humble as their employment was, to the greatest king in the world at that time, nor to own them before the grandees of the Egyptian court. There is something very noble and excellent in this part of Joseph's character.

CHAPTER XII.

Jacob returns

to Goshen.

AFTER Jacob had thus been presented to the king, he withdrew ; but in doing so, he saluted or blessed Pharaoh again. The Jews have a tradition that the blessing he gave was, that the Nile might rise high enough to cover the land again. If this tradition be true, then we may believe, that the Nile did not overflow its banks during the years of famine. I do not know whether there is any foundation for this tradition. I should think that Moses would have told us what the blessing was, if it was different from the blessing customary on such occasions.

Jacob then returned to Goshen, where Joseph settled him and his brethren. He gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best part of the land, which is called (in Gen. xlvii. 11) Raameses or Rameses. In this, Joseph acted according to the command of Pharaoh ; so that you see, Joseph did not abuse his power to benefit his relations, but acted with the knowledge of the king, and according to his command. Yet this was doing more than even Joseph's brethren had requested of Pharaoh. All they asked was, the pri-

Rameses,a tract of country.

vilage to sojourn in Goshen ; that is, to live there as strangers for a short time. You know they were used to a Nomadic or wandering life, but Joseph, by command of Pharaoh gave them fixed or permanent possessions, which they could call their own. The place, you observe, is called Raamses or Rameses, and not Goshen. If you look on the map of Egypt, you will see a city or town marked, which bears the same name, and probably you may think that was the place. But it is not so : the town, which you see marked down, was built or fortified long afterward by the Israelites. (Exod. i. 11.) The Rameses here spoken of, it is supposed by some, was either the land of Goshen itself, or a larger tract of country in which the land of Goshen was situated.

A celebrated Frenchman, whose name is Champolion Figeac,* found this name sculptured on several monuments in Egypt, and he says, it is made up of two words, one of which (Ra) signifies "the sun," and the other (Messesse) signifies "child," or "one born;" so the whole word means pretty much the same as "son of the sun."

* This learned man succeeded in discovering what may be called the alphabet of the Egyptian language, of which the only remains are those marks and fanciful emblems, which may be seen on the Egyptian monuments. His discovery has thrown great light on the early history of Egypt. Cassiodorus says, these hieroglyphics were the ancient Chaldaic characters; and Pliny says, they were known only to the priests.

The familysettled.

We are told that a celebrated Egyptian monarch, whose name was Sesostris,* took this lofty title; and also that the Incas of Peru assumed the same. It is very singular that we should find such sameness between Egyptian and Peruvian titles. Can you tell me, William, where Peru is?

William. On the western coast of South America.

Right. It is at a great distance from Egypt then. But Joseph did not go to live with his father and brethren in Rameses or Goshen. He was obliged to live at On, or Heliopolis, if that was the seat of government, but that was not very far off. His business for the king, no doubt, allowed him to visit his father and brethren occasionally; perhaps often. If we think how kind he was, we shall not doubt that he took great pleasure in seeing how contented and happy they were, in the beautiful land of Goshen. But the greatest of all his pleasures was to see his venerable father peaceful, and all his wants well supplied. He could not be otherwise than thankful to God, for bringing them so near together again.

But some of you may think that Joseph might have done something more for his brethren, because

* You will find some account of this king in Herodotus, book 2, §§ 102, 103, 106. He was the son of the Pharaoh who was drowned with his army in the Red Sea, while in the pursuit of the Israelites, whose name it is supposed, was Amenophis.

Joseph's

prudence.

he was the first lord of Egypt, and had so great influence with the king. You may think that he might have given them profitable offices or employment in State affairs under him, so that they could have lived at ease, like great and rich people, without the labor of taking care of cattle. But Joseph's conduct, in this particular, was very prudent and proper, and deserves to be praised. If Joseph had bestowed upon his relations offices of honor, he would, in all probability, have brought on them the ill-will of many of the Egyptians who, no doubt, coveted such places for themselves; and he would have given them a handle for attacking him. They might have said, that Jacob and his sons were foreigners and unacquainted with the Egyptian language, and unskillful in matters of government; that all they knew, was to take care of cattle and raise grain. Besides, it would probably have been necessary for Joseph to remove more capable persons from office, to make room for them, or if not, to pass such persons by, in making appointments, and this would have been wrong, and prejudicial to the king and the people. Every one, in such a situation as Joseph then occupied, when he has an office to bestow on some one, or is obliged to employ some one about the public service, ought to look out for the most capable and skillful person, who can discharge the office or duty best, for the public

advantage. He ought not to give such employments to his relations, if they have no fitness for them, or if they are less capable than others. Public offices are created for the public good, not for the advantage of particular persons.

In this respect then, Joseph showed a very reasonable love to his relations, by providing for them, with the king's assent, as he did. It was a mode of life they were accustomed to, and it was agreeable to them. They had experience in the management of cattle, and were capable of teaching the Egyptians that business. But in other, and especially in difficult employments, they would have had very much, if not every thing to learn; and whether they performed their duties well or ill, would have been envied, or abused or laughed at. But while we judge of Joseph's conduct, by the rules of prudence, modesty, and good manners, we must not forget, that he was not only a pious man, but especially employed by Divine Providence in the execution of a great design. If we turn back now to what God said to Jacob in the vision he had at Beersheba, (Gen. xlv. 2, 4,) we shall find it was God's plan, that the family of Jacob should emigrate to Egypt and remain there until they grew into a nation. Egypt was, at that time, by far the most civilized, best organized, and most

God's plan in regardto Jacob's family.

regularly governed country in the world.* But the children of Israel were not to stay there always, and therefore they must not be mixed up with the Egyptians; for it was God's plan, when they became numerous enough to drive out the people, that had taken possession of the land promised to Abraham, and occupy it themselves, to bring them out of Egypt, into their own country again. Now, if Jacob and his family had continued always to live in Canaan, most likely they would have mixed themselves up with the inhabitants of Canaan, so as to become one people with them; and after they all went into Egypt, if they had not been settled by themselves, they probably would have been mixed up with the Egyptians and become one people with them. But Divine Providence proceeded in a way in which they should be kept by themselves; and not only this, but in a way by which the family of each of Jacob's sons should be kept separate, and thus form so many tribes, which should be called after the names of the sons of Jacob.

You remember that the Egyptians had an aver-

*In Egypt also, they would be less liable to be corrupted by idolatry. For although the Egyptians were idolaters, yet they kept strangers away from their religious rites. But the idolatry of the Canaanites was seductive and dangerous, and they took pains to extend it to other people. Under Providence, therefore, the descendants of Jacob would be less liable to apostacy in Egypt than in the land of Canaan.

 Their preparation

 for a return.

sion to shepherds and herdmen;* their religion also was altogether different from that of Jacob and his sons. For these reasons, the Egyptians would be likely to keep away from their settlements; at least, it is not probable they would mix up with them. Then again, as Joseph gave them fixed possessions, by the command of Pharaoh, they could not keep up any longer the habit of wandering from place to place for pasture, as they did in the land of Canaan; and the habits of regular industry at some one place, would prepare them and their descendants to settle down, as civilized men do, when they should go back to their own country.† In this way then, the children of Israel

* Some persons, (Dr. Hales for example,) have accounted for the aversion in this way: they say that in the reign of Timaus or Thamuz, Egypt was invaded and subdued by a tribe of Cushite shepherds from Arabia, who cruelly enslaved the whole country, under a dynasty of six kings. But the natives at length rebelled, and after a war of thirty years, expelled these shepherds. They then settled on the south-western border of the land of Canaan, along the sea coast, and that part of the country was, in consequence of their occupying it, called *Pallisthan*, which is a Sanscrit, or primitive Syriac word, and signifies, as we are told, "the shepherd land." Hence these shepherds were called *Philistines*. The Egyptians hated them for the wrongs they had done them; and for the same reason were averse to all who came from Canaan, especially if they followed the same business. It is supposed too, that these Cushite shepherds had previously occupied Goshen, and when they were expelled, it was in a measure desolate. Dr. Hales thought they were expelled about twenty-seven years before Joseph was made prime minister.

† Yet the Nomadic condition of the Hebrews really continued, with some interruption, from the call of Abraham, until his descendants (through Isaac and Jacob) returned from Egypt, and entered into the land of Canaan under Joshua. Under Abraham,

Settlement

in Canaan.

were prepared to fulfill the Divine plan, and to return, after some years, as so many large and powerful tribes, to be settled by themselves in separate portions of the land of Israel, as you see it marked off on the map. It was God, therefore, who inclined Pharaoh to do what he did, and Joseph to do what he did. Yet, while we believe this, we ought to allow Pharaoh full credit for his generosity, and Joseph full credit for his modesty, prudence, and good sense.

Now I will say a few words about Joseph's brethren. They appear to have been perfectly satisfied with this arrangement. Nothing is said in the Bible which gives us reason to think they had any wish to be any thing more than they were, or to leave the business in which they were brought up, or to get their living without labor. So far from it, they told the king they were shepherds or herdmen, and asked him to let them live in Goshen, for the sake of its good pasture. You see by this, they were not ashamed of their business, nor to have it known that they worked for their living.*

Isaac, and Jacob, they were one Nomadic family. In Egypt they increased to twelve tribes large enough to form a nation. When they left Egypt, under the conduct of Moses, they became nomadic again, for the period of forty years, and finally a settled people, in the land, which God gave to Abraham, under Joshua and the Judges.

* In after times, among the descendants of these men, some who followed the same employment, were called to be kings and prophets—as Saul and David, Elisha and Amos—nor was it considered an unbecoming employment for the sons of kings; as we

Joseph's brethren

contented.

Pharaoh saw this, and the only promotion he offered, was to make the best of them overseers of his own cattle. We do not know, however, whether any of them were promoted even to that distinction; for the Bible says nothing about it. But they showed their prudence and good sense, in asking nothing more of the king, than to be permitted to follow their calling, notwithstanding their brother was so powerful with the king. The consequence of this conduct was, they became the heads of great tribes, and their names have become immortalized in the Scriptures. Our Saviour spoke of the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. xix. 28.) The Apostles Paul, James, and John, also spoke of them, (Acts xxvi. 7; James i. 1; Rev. vii. 4, 8,) while the names of the great men who figured at that time, in the public affairs of Egypt, have been forgotten. Even Joseph's name was not given to a tribe, (except in the prophetic book of Revelation vii. 8,) but the names of his sons Ephraim and Manasseh were; and if Joseph's name was preserved in the Egyptian records, on account of his connection with public affairs, it was his Egyptian name Zaphnath Paaneah, and not his Hebrew name Joseph.

find Absalom making a great feast, at one time on the occasion of shearing his sheep. David gives a beautiful view of the employment of an Israelitish shepherd, in the 23d Psalm, which he converts into an allegory. Our Lord himself also employs a similar allegory to describe his own cares and concerns. (John 10th chap.)

Their employmentnot disreputable.

But if we look at this matter properly, their employment was not in the least degree disgraceful to them, or to their brother Joseph. No employment is in fact disgraceful, which is both virtuous in itself, and useful to society. Nor would their employment have been even unbecoming, if they had been as learned as Moses, who, we are told, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. (Acts vii. 22.) Yet now-a-days there are many persons who think if they have a little more learning than is common; and especially if they have powerful relations, that it is beneath them, to be engaged in the common employments of life, which after all, are the most necessary and the most useful. I hope you will never think so, but rather be content to serve God and your fellow men in the sphere of his allotment. When you leave this college, all of you, even those who go through all the departments of the college, will be obliged to learn some useful trade or art, which those, who are wiser than you, may think most proper for you. Many of you will probably leave this college as soon as you are well instructed in necessary and common learning. Some, perhaps, will become farmers; others, sailors or carpenters, or masons, or be taught some other mechanical art or trade. You must not forget this; but keep it before your mind continually, and when the time comes, you should

Cincinnatus, a

Roman farmer.

resolve—however much you have been taught here—to learn the business you are put to, thoroughly, and by a life of industry, and enterprise, and virtue, to adorn it. If you should acquire a great deal of knowledge—enough to prepare you to study any profession—still you should try to make your knowledge useful in your *proper trade or business*. You should resolve also not to leave your trade lightly, after you have learned it. If you can be more useful in some public employment, people will find it out soon enough either for your happiness or your true interest.

There is a very interesting story told of an old Roman, who was a farmer. He lived about 2,300 years ago, or about 1200 years after Joseph. His name was Cincinnatus. The story shortly told is this: His countrymen wished him to be dictator,* because the country was in danger. Without his knowing or doing any thing about the matter, they appointed him to that office. He was ploughing in his field, when the news of his appointment was brought to him. He did not refuse to accept the office, because he thought his country had a right to his services; but he left his plough with regret. He took command of the army, conquered the

* In ancient Rome, the dictator was an extraordinary magistrate, invested with unlimited power. Such an officer was appointed only in times of peril or distress. He continued in office only six months. The office was instituted at Rome, 501 B. C.

Cincinnatus

appointed dictator.

enemy, and went to Rome in triumph. But he gave up his office in sixteen days after he was appointed, and returned to his plough.*

This old Roman thought it no disgrace to him to be a farmer, although his countrymen thought him the fittest man in the nation to be entrusted with the highest office they could bestow. In this he resembled Joseph, who thought it no disgrace to have his brethren follow their business, though Pharaoh thought him the fittest man in his kingdom to be his prime minister. If you are as wise as they, you will think so too, and be willing to act accordingly.

Now we will leave this part of the history a little while, to see what happened among the Egyptians during the remaining years of famine. Two years of the famine were past, when Jacob and his family went down to Egypt. (Gen. xlv. 6.) Already had Joseph sold a great deal of corn

* The ancient republics afford us several instances of generals and statesmen, having exchanged their boisterous employments in war and politics, for the more peaceable ones of the fields and the cultivation of the ground. Agriculture has been aptly styled the master sinew of every great state. It is the great art of free nations, and of our own. Thompson says—

“In ancient times, the sacred plough employed
The kings and awful fathers of mankind,
And some, with whom compared, your insect-tribes
Are but the beings of a summer’s day,
Have held the scale of empire, ruled the storm
Of mighty war; then with unwearied hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seized
The plough and greatly independent lived.”

Sale of the

corn in store.

to the Egyptians, and to people of other countries, to the great advantage of the king. In the following years, the necessities of the people were more urgent still, for the famine was very grievous. The Bible does not inform us any thing about the price at which Joseph sold the corn; nor whether he raised the price after all the private stores were exhausted, as most people would be likely to do in such circumstances; for many men love money so much, that they take advantage, even of the distress of others, to enrich themselves, which is very wrong. I think, however, we may be sure, that Joseph would not do any such thing of his own accord, even if he could have gained by it. Joseph was a good man, and very humane. No doubt he was greatly pained at the want and distress of the poor people, who came to him for food.

At the end of the fifth year of the famine, (as I understand the history,) all the money in Egypt and Canaan had been paid to Pharaoh for corn. Every one felt the embarrassment extremely—the inhabitants of Egypt, as well as strangers.

Do you know, David, the meaning of the word monopoly? You do not; well, I will try to explain it to you. When one man, or a company of men has the exclusive power of selling any particular article, or kind of goods, such as corn, for example, they have a *monopoly* of that particular

Monopoly

engrossing.

article. Sometimes a particular man or company of men, may buy up all there is of a particular article, and in this way become the only persons who have any of it to sell. This is called *engrossing*, when the article bought is corn, or dead victuals, and the person buys in order to sell it again. In some countries it is forbidden by law.* It has sometimes happened, that the government of a country has given a particular man or company this privilege. Now, in consequence of Pharaoh's following the advice of Joseph, he was the only person who had any corn to sell, after all the private stores were exhausted; and so it came to pass that he had a monopoly of the corn. The consequence was, that he collected through Joseph all the money in the country. After all the money was paid to him, he gave them corn in exchange for their horses, flocks, and herds. Thus they were sustained another year. By this we know

* Forestalling the market, is described to be the buying or contracting for any merchandise or victual coming in the way to the market, or dissuading persons from bringing their goods or provisions there, or persuading them to enhance the price when there, so as to make the market dearer to the fair trader. This is considered an offense against public trade by the laws of England, and is punishable, as well as engrossing in that country, by fine and imprisonment. Among the Romans, such offenses or malpractices to raise the price of provisions, were punished by a pecuniary fine. In thickly settled countries, and in times of scarcity such laws are necessary to prevent extreme suffering, especially among the poor. In China, we are told, that a very small advance in the price of rice, will produce starvation among thousands of the poor.

Horses

of Egypt.

the Egyptians had horses, and knew how to use them, as early as Joseph's day. That animal appears to have been indigenous, that is native, or naturally first produced in Africa. Horses were not commonly used in the land of Canaan, till the reign of king Solomon,* (1 Kings x. 28,) which was more than six hundred years after Joseph's time. These facts may help us to understand such places as Deut. xvii. 16, and Isaiah xxxi. 1, which mentions horses in connection with Egypt. Other ancient writers speak of the abundance of horses in Egypt. The Greek poet Homer, who lived about the same time that king Solomon lived, or perhaps a little later, describes the ancient city of Thebes in upper Egypt, (which some think† is the same as

* The Egyptian breed, it may be judged even by paintings, was particularly fine; being, in appearance, only a more powerful Arab. But it is said, the noblest horses known to antiquity, were reared on the Nisæan plains, in Media—probably the same breed as the modern Turkomân. There were horses and chariots in Canaan before Solomon's reign, for Absalom and Adonijah both had them. Probably they were a new luxury at that time, in which very few could indulge, and these sons of David used them to make a semi-regal display. (2 Sam. xv. 1; 1 Kings i. 5.) In the Scriptures, the *horse* is the emblem of military power; (Exod. xv. 21; Jer. li. 21; Ezek. xxiii. 6; Hagg. ii. 22; Zech. ix. 10;) and *white*, the chosen color for victors in triumphal processions.

† No, (No Ammon, Diospolis or Thebes) was probably the most ancient city of Egypt. Some suppose it was built by the first settlers,—by Misraim and his family. Whence, as Dr. Hales thought, Egypt in general is called the "land of Mizraim" in the original Scriptures, although it is usually translated "land of Egypt." The Egyptian name of Thebes was No, (Ezek. xxx. 14,) to which was added the name Amon or Amoun, the title which the false god Jupiter bore among the Egyptians, according to Herodotus, whence Jeremiah xlvi. 25, should be read. "Behold I will punish Amon (the god) of No, and Pharaoh," &c

The Egyptians give up• their flocks and herds.

the city No, mentioned in Nahum iii. 8,) as having a hundred gates, out of which two hundred warriors went with horses and chariots. (Jer. xlv. 25; Ezek. xxx. 14, 15, 16.) Diodorus, an ancient historian, speaks of the whole country between Thebes and Memphis as filled with the royal stables. But let us pass on.

Some of you may think it was very hard for Joseph to take all the horses, flocks, herds, and asses from the poor people; but you must remember these animals were of little value in time of famine. The Egyptians, it may be presumed, had little or nothing to feed them with, and the only way to keep them alive, was for the king to take them and feed them. This the king did, and gave the people in exchange bread enough to support them, the sixth year of the famine.

When that year was ended, the people had nothing left to buy food, for the seventh and last year of the famine, but their land and their bodies. Accordingly, they offered to sell both themselves and their land to the king, and so become the king's servants; only they wished him to give them seed corn to plant after the famine should be over, so that they might support themselves after that, and the land should not be desolate. But Joseph would not buy their bodies, for Moses says only, that he bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh,

The peopleremoved.

except the land of the priests, which he did not buy; for the priests had an allowance from Pharaoh, and they lived upon that. After Joseph had bought from every man his field, he removed the people into the cities from one extremity of Egypt to the other.

As soon as the famine was over, Joseph gave out the land again among all the Egyptians, and seed corn to sow it; but he reserved for the king one-fifth part of all they should raise from year to year, and it became a law for the whole country, that the people should give the king one-fifth of the produce of the land, except the priests; and this law was in force, at least, two hundred and fifty years, which was long after Joseph's death. Moses says, it was a law of the land when he wrote this history, which was 1,452 years B. C. The rest of the produce the people had to support themselves, and as a reward for their labor. You will not understand this transaction, without some explanation of the meaning of the word *bought*, as Moses used it. For while Moses tells us that Joseph *bought* only the land, he represents Joseph himself as saying to the Egyptians, "I have this day bought you and your lands for Pharaoh." The Jews used this word to denote the relation of marriage; as when a man married a wife, they spoke of the woman as of one who had been bought, as if

The compact

explained.

the man *bought* his wife. But then she was not his slave, but his companion. All Joseph meant, therefore was, that he had made a bargain with the people on behalf of the king, by which the king had acquired more right in their land, and greater claims upon their persons, than perhaps they were ever willing to allow him before.* It is very plain, the people did not expect to give up the land, and not have it any more, as if they had sold it out and out; because they bargained for seed to sow it again, and they did possess the land again and lived on it, (though perhaps, it was not the very same land,) and cultivated it as they did before, so that we must not understand the word *bought* as we do in our transactions.

Joseph has been blamed by some persons for his conduct in this business; but without any good

* The people promised to be *servants* to Pharaoh—i. e., *amenable* to him, as subjects are to their king. (See 1 Sam. xvii. 8, for an example of the use of this word.) In the time of Joseph, (as some learned men suppose,) the people were licentious and lawless. Previously to his times, they had been compelled by a powerful enemy to unite under one head, but when the shepherd kings were expelled, the people lapsed into their former condition, and the government of the king was greatly enfeebled. This measure of Joseph, or rather of the king was designed, it is supposed, to restore vigor to government, and to remedy the defects in the national establishment; and from that measure, the monarchy of Egypt became very powerful, and continued longer than any other mentioned in history. Mr. Bryant says, that previous to Joseph's time, Egypt had been divided into petty principalities, or at least, the people were under the jurisdiction of different governors, and that there is reason to think this variety of governments was in a great measure abolished by Joseph.

Joseph's conductexplained.

reason; because it is plain, that Joseph acted by the king's directions. It is true, he had great authority in many things, but there were many things he could not do. We have seen that he could not send wagons out of Egypt to bring his father, nor could he give his father and brethren a place to settle upon, without the king's permission, and by and by we shall see, that he could not even go out of the country himself to bury his father, without first asking leave of the king. 'Then again, it is not likely, if Joseph had been left to himself, that he would have favored the idolatrous priests of Egypt, by giving them corn and letting them keep their lands, while he took the lands of all the other Egyptians. Besides this, Pharaoh claimed great, if not absolute power over the people, and it was not for Joseph to decide whether he claimed it rightfully or not. A great portion of the land seems to have been already at his disposal, else he would not have told Joseph, as he did, to settle his father and brethren, and their families, wherever he pleased. Some persons think, that the fifth part of the corn, which Pharaoh took up, during the years of plenty, he did not buy, but took it as a tax, which he had the right to make them pay; but we cannot determine how that was. For such reasons as these, some learned men think that the whole of this business was directed by Pharaoh himself,

Joseph actedunder the king.

while Joseph carried it into execution as his chief minister.

It seems singular to us that Joseph should have the people removed into the cities, after he bought the land. Perhaps the reason was, to supply them more easily with food, from the store-houses in the cities.* Yet, perhaps, it was a plan of the king to make the people more dependent upon him. And perhaps also, it was his plan not to give back to every man, the very same land he had before, but a different piece of land, (as large and as good) which he should hold as his tenant, paying one fifth of the produce, as a rent or a tax to the king and his successors forever. It may be the king thought, if he did this, they would be less likely to dispute the rights he had acquired, by the bargain he had made with them, than they would be, if he suffered every man to remain on the very same land he had before. It was not unfrequent in ancient times, and in eastern countries, for kings to transport their people in this way, for reasons of state policy.† In this country, we should think

* Some learned persons think it was only a measure of convenience, and that only the people, therefore, who lived round about every store city were brought into that city.

† It has been observed by a learned author, that the removal of the Egyptians into new and different allotments from one end of the kingdom to the other, was an act of great policy. It was the very thing that, many ages after, was practiced by that consummate commander Hannibal, in which he was imitated by the Romans. The kings of Assyria previously had acted in the same

Joseph's conduct

explained.

such a measure very tyrannical and cruel. But we must remember that no people we read of in history, ever had such great liberties as we have, and it would not be reasonable to expect that Joseph would cross the king in a State measure of this sort, if the people did not resist it, nor even object to it.

But how was it possible to get all the country people into cities? One would think the cities of Egypt would not hold the half of them. There were, no doubt, a great many cities, even then, many more than we have any account of. Herodotus, a Greek historian, who lived about four hundred years before Christ, informs us that there

manner. It was a sure way to prevent innovation and rebellion. An ancient author, cited by Eusebius, says Joseph taught the Egyptians to separate their fields and to distinguish them by proper boundaries; which put an end to the many feuds, and acts of violence, that had before subsisted among them. Many persons have thought that the confusion of property, which must have prevailed for a while, gave rise to practical geometry, as a means to remedy the evil; and that in consequence of it, charts and maps were first delineated in that country. Their improvements in this science, are thought to have been occasioned by the nature of their country; for the overflow of the Nile confounded all property, and they were obliged, on the retreat of the waters, to have recourse to geometrical operations, in order to determine the limits of their possessions. If Joseph first taught the people to distinguish their possessions by geometrical methods, he originated one of the most useful of the arts. Certain it is, however, that in later times, this branch of science attained to great excellence in Egypt. The geometry of Euclid, of Alexandria, has been very generally adopted as a standard, although it was written about three hundred years B. C. It has been translated from the Greek into the languages of England, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Egypt, Turkey, Arabia, Persia, China, and perhaps some others.

The citiesof Egypt.

were twenty thousand cities in the valley of the Nile in his time, and that the people did not live scattered, but in towns. It is not impossible that some of the cities and towns Herodotus spoke of, were built at this very time, in consequence of what Joseph did. But the principal thing I wish you to remember is this, that Joseph is not to be regarded in this business; as if he had of his own choice, contrived a plan to make the common people first poor, and then slaves. I do not think the people were really free before; and if they were, I do not think it was Joseph's wish to make them slaves. He acted, as we have reason to believe, by the king's order. Nor did even the king make them slaves, by this transaction. He became the owner and chief proprietor of all the land, it is true; and they became his tenants, and bound by their agreement to pay him a rent, which might be considered as a kind of tax. The land in England, and in some other countries of Europe, was once held by the people pretty much in the same way. William Penn at one time owned all the land in Pennsylvania, which he sold out to people who came here to settle, receiving in some cases a rent, but not so much, by any means, as one-fifth of the annual produce, although in all cases he reserved one-fifth of all the gold and silver which should be found on the land sold. So you see, that what

Joseph's conduct

explained.

Pharaoh did, was not very unlike what has been done since his time, in western nations.*

Yet it certainly would have been more generous in the king to have given his poor people corn to support them, than to have taken all they had in this way. But this Pharaoh was a very politic prince. He expended his treasures, we are told, in useful improvements, and providing defenses against foreign enemies, and perhaps he had an eye to these, in this transaction; yet we know so little about him and the times in which he lived, that we cannot be sure that we know what his reasons were, or what use he made of the money and property he acquired in this way, and so we cannot know what excuses he might make for doing what he did. There is one thing, however, which can be said in his favor. The people did not think he was harsh or cruel; for they said to Joseph, "Thou hast saved our lives—let us find favor in the

* Indeed it is not impossible that the arrangement between Pharaoh and his people, suggested the method of parceling out the lands of conquered countries, which was so extensively employed in Europe by conquering kings or generals, long after Joseph's day. But you cannot fully understand this subject without more knowledge of history than you have. I will only add, therefore, that by the original constitution of the kingdom, settled by Menes or Misraim, (as we learn from Diodorus,) all the lands were at first divided between the king, the priesthood, and the soldiery, who possessed each, a separate third part, to support their respective establishments. If this division subsisted in Joseph's time, the change which Joseph made, was rather for the advantage of the people than otherwise, while it broke down the power of the two other estates.

The peoplepraised Joseph.

eyes of my lord, and we will be bondmen to Pharaoh."

Now we will leave this subject. When you are older, and know more about history, and government, you will be able to understand this subject, better than you can now. But I think I can assure you beforehand, that whatever judgment you may form about the character of this king, you will be convinced that Joseph was not to be blamed for the part he acted in the matter. In the next lesson we will take up the history of Jacob again.

CHAPTER XIII.

Jacob

in Goshen.

JOSEPH settled Jacob and his family in the beautiful country of Goshen, as I have already told you, and there he lived seventeen years, which was a long time, as we should think, for a man so old as he was. Rest and quiet could not be otherwise than very pleasant to him; particularly after so many years of labor, and sorrow, and care. You remember I could not tell you what happened to Joseph during the first seventeen years of his life, while he lived in Canaan, because the Bible gives no information about it. So now I am obliged to say, I cannot tell what Jacob did, or what happened to him, during the greater part of the seventeen years he lived in Egypt, for the same reason. You observe, that although Jacob lived until he was 147 years old, and Joseph lived till he was 110 years old, yet they lived near each other only thirty-four years—that is seventeen years in the land of Canaan, and seventeen years in Egypt. During the first of these periods Jacob took a tender care of Joseph, and during the last, Joseph returned his father's kindness by taking as tender care of him. When Jacob knew that he should

Jacob sends.for Joseph.

soon die, he sent for Joseph to come and see him for a particular reason, and Joseph dutifully hastened to Goshen to learn his father's wishes. When he arrived, his father spoke to him thus :

“ If now I have found favor in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, that thou wilt act toward me with kindness and truth. Do not, I pray thee, bury me in Egypt. When I lie down with my fathers, do thou carry me from Egypt, and bury me in their burying place.”* Then Joseph said, “ I will do according to thy word.” But Jacob said, “ Swear to me.” Then Joseph swore to him ; then Jacob bowed toward the head of his bed. Some time ago, I told you something about the form of taking a solemn oath among the Jews ; and I referred you to this place. The usual form of an oath or solemn pledge given to a person at that time, was to put the hand under his thigh, as Joseph did on this occasion to his father. Learned men differ about the meaning of this ceremony. Some think, that the person who thus put

* This request is a proof of the firm persuasion of Jacob, that God would accomplish his promise to bring his descendants out of Egypt, and establish them in the land of Canaan ; for why should he have chosen a burial place, in the power of another people, in preference to one in the land where his family were settled, and sustained by the authority of Joseph, the first minister of the king, and where, he knew they would all be buried ? It may be added, that the patriarchs of the Hebrews all put an especial value on their dead bodies ; they were religiously laid up in Machpelah, and this care of theirs, was a confession of their sure and certain hope of resurrection, which they thus connected with the land of Canaan.

 Jacob requires an

 oath of Joseph.

his hand under the thigh of another person, signified in that way that he would be subject to that other person, and would do what he bid. A Spanish Jew, named Aben Ezra, who died in 1174, said that the same custom prevailed in India in his days. Perhaps this was the meaning of the ceremony. Others explain the ceremony differently, and perhaps we cannot certainly know the particular meaning of it.*

But why did Jacob wish Joseph to swear to him, you may inquire. He could not doubt that Joseph would keep his promise, if he made one, without an oath, and even if he made no promise, Jacob must have known that Joseph would be anxious to fulfill his dying request. Some think Jacob required an oath, so that Joseph might tell Pharaoh, that his father made him swear, supposing that this would

*By our law every witness in a court of justice is obliged to make an oath or affirmation, that "he will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," before he is allowed to give his testimony. But there is no particular form essential to an oath. As the purpose of an oath is to bind the conscience, every man of every religion should be bound by that form which he himself thinks will bind his conscience most religiously and solemnly. For this reason our law permits a Jew to take an oath on the Old Testament, with his head covered; and a Christian to swear on the New Testament, or the New and Old Testament. A Mahomedan may take an oath on the Koran. Some lift up the right hand when they take an oath, others kiss the Bible, but neither the one ceremony nor the other is essential to the oath. So tender is our law to the consciences of men, that it does not compel a man to take an oath at all, if he thinks it wrong to do so, but it allows him to make a solemn affirmation instead of an oath. This shows you how much ceremonies and forms may change, while the substance of the thing remains the same.

Joseph returnsto the city.

make the king more willing to let Joseph go out of the country ; and we find that Joseph did, in fact, give this as a reason to the king, why he should let him go to the land of Canaan to bury his father. (Gen. 1. 5.) Had it not been for the oath, Pharaoh might have refused to allow Joseph to leave the country, as he probably continued to be chief minister, and was very useful to him, although the years of famine were past. It was very natural for Jacob to wish to be buried at Hebron, where Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Leah were buried. But he wished to be buried there for another reason, *namely*, God had promised the land of Canaan to him and his descendants. In this way, he showed his perfect confidence in God's promise, although he knew he could not live to see it fulfilled.

After Joseph had made the promise and oath, he returned to the city of On, for it does not appear, that Jacob was dangerously sick at that time. He was old and feeble, and knew that he could not live long, and he had this matter so much at heart, that he sent for Joseph to have it settled. Joseph, no doubt, was expecting to be sent for again, as soon as his father should become really sick ; for he too, had something to desire of his father, which had not yet been done. The Bible does not inform us how long it was before Jacob fell sick, but as soon

Joseph's sons

visit Jacob.

as it happened, a messenger was sent to Joseph to tell him. On this occasion, Joseph took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, who probably were all he had, and hastened with them to see his father. We cannot tell how old they were precisely,* but they must have been more than seventeen years of age, and not more than twenty-four or twenty-five years old, because they were born during the seven years of plenty. It was very natural for Joseph to wish that his sons should see their grandfather once more, but he had another reason. He wished that they might receive his father's blessing. The times in which Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob lived, belonged to the patriarchal age or dispensation. When the father of the family was about to die, he called his children and grandchildren together, and took solemn leave of them, and as the priest of his family or race, gave them his blessing. No part of the Bible, you must bear in mind, was then written; no temples or churches were then built, and no order of men was set apart, by Divine appointment, for the purposes of religion, as was the case in the time of Moses.† God gave

* Mr. Clinton, a learned chronologer, says that Ephraim, the youngest son, was about five years old, at the time of the coming of Jacob to Egypt. According to this, he was about twenty-two years old when Jacob died.

† The first instance recorded in the Bible of any particular place being set apart for the purpose of Divine worship, occurs in Gen. xxi. 33, where it is said, Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba,

Jacob adopts

Joseph's sons.

to Jacob on this occasion, the spirit of prophecy, so that he could foretell to his children and grandchildren what would happen to them long afterward. You see by this, that the occasion of this visit of Joseph to his father, was very important as well as solemn.

When Jacob was informed that Joseph had come to see him again, he exerted himself, so as to sit up on his bed, though he was very weak. The first thing he did, was to adopt Joseph's two sons, for his own sons, and make them his heirs. Do you know what is the meaning of adoption, Samuel?

Samuel. It is when a man takes a poor boy that has no parents, and brings him up as his own son.

That is a very good example, but in this case Manasseh and Ephraim were not poor boys, and Joseph, their father, was alive. Yet Jacob adopted them, because he took them for his own sons, and made them his heirs, although they were not in truth his own sons, but Joseph's sons.

You see by this, that the practice of adopting

and there called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. The performance of religious rites in groves of oak continued for ages; not only among Abraham's posterity, but among the heathen nations, by whom the practice was transmitted to the Druids. The heathenish nations of antiquity, as well as the Hebrews, as often as they fell into idolatry, chose the tops of hills or mountains for their worship. (Numb. xxii. 41; Levit. xxvi. 30; 2 Kings xvi. 3, 4.—xii. 3.—xv. 4, 35; 1 Kings xxii. 43; Numb. xxiii. 14, 28.) Kæmpfer says, that in Japan, most of their temples are constructed on eminences, and often upon the ascent of high mountains.

Why Jacob

adopted them.

children is very ancient. It was not confined to the Hebrews.* It was a custom among the Greeks and Romans, to adopt children, and they had certain ceremonies, by which it was done. But in this case Jacob adopted Manasseh and Ephraim by word of mouth. You may wish to ask, perhaps, what Jacob had to give them, or make them heir to; and also how it would be better for them to be Jacob's heirs than Joseph's; for Joseph was probably very much richer than Jacob, in goods and money.

You will not understand this without attending to what Jacob said on this occasion. He began thus: "Almighty God appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said, I will make thee fruitful and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and I will give this land to thy seed after thee, for an everlasting possession."† You see by this, that Jacob

* Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses. (Exod. ii. 10.) Mordecai adopted Esther. (Esth. ii. 7, 15.) The word *adoption* occurs several times in the New Testament, (as in Gal. iv. 5; Rom. viii. 15, 23.—ix. 4; Eph. i. 5.) Among the Romans, adopted children were on the same footing with other children, and they were entitled to be heirs of the person who adopted them, if he did not expressly disinherit them. Our law is different. An adopted child gets no share of the estate of the person who adopts him, unless it is expressly given to him, by testament or last will.

† Some generations after the flood, there was a partition of the earth, among the descendants of Noah, by Divine appointment. (Gen. x. 5, 32; 1 Chron. i. 19.) To this partition, the apostle Paul refers in Acts xvii. 26. Out of this partition, a portion of the earth was reserved for Israel, the chosen people; and to this exception

Ephraim

and Manasseh.

had respect to this promise of God to him, and the gift of the whole land of Canaan, and by adopting these two sons of Joseph, he meant to give them a share in these promises and that country. If you will look on this map you will see the shares marked off, which afterward were actually given to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh. In Ephraim's part you find Shechem, which you remember was the place to which Jacob sent Joseph to find his brethren, and in Manasseh's part, you find Dothan, which is the place where Joseph actually found them, and where they sold him to the Ishmaelites. Well then, this whole country was the estate of Jacob, by God's gift, which is the highest possible right, any man can have, (Ps. xxiv. 1,) and of course, he could give the sons of Joseph something that Joseph could not give them.

After Jacob had spoken of this promise of God, he then adopted Joseph's two sons, by these words, "And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh,

or reservation, Moses is supposed, by some learned men, to refer in Deut. xxxii. 7, 8, 9, where he says, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This excepted part, however, was usurped by the people who gave their name to it. They knew the Divine allotment, yet wilfully transgressed; which brought them and their posterity under the Divine displeasure. Hence, some have explained the curse of Noah, (in Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27,) not as an expression of resentment against Ham, but as a prophetic denunciation of the foreseen disobedience of Canaan and of the evil consequences which would flow from it.

The privileges

conferred by this adoption.

who were born to thee in the land of Egypt, before I came to thee in Egypt, are my sons—like Reuben and Simeon they shall be mine.” Reuben and Simeon were the two oldest of Jacob’s sons, and by using these words, Jacob gave a double portion of the land which God had given him, to the sons of Joseph. Jacob also made these two sons of Joseph, the heads or founders of tribes, and not merely the heads of families, as the rest of Jacob’s grandsons were, and they had as many rights and privileges as the other tribes.

This was a very important matter, because it settled the future fortunes of Joseph’s sons. By birth, they were Egyptians; their mother was an Egyptian, and probably the daughter of an idolatrous priest. They might, if they had chosen to do so, have joined themselves to the Egyptians, and shared in the honors and riches of Egypt. But they chose, as it appears, to take their share in the promises God made to Jacob.* You may find their names mentioned, as the heads of tribes in the 48th

* Moses followed their example in this respect; for there is reason to think that he was very little engaged in the business of the nation. He seems to have sacrificed all views of succession to the throne and of every kind of political advancement. Throughout the whole account he gives of himself, previous to the exodus of the children of Israel, he appears in a private capacity; having renounced the advantages he might have derived from his adoption by the king’s daughter, and returned to the stock of his fathers. (Heb. xi. 24, 27.) Yet Egypt was never more powerful or more flourishing, nor its throne more attractive, than in the days of Moses.

Jacob blessesJoseph's sons.

chapter of Ezekiel, 5th and 6th verses, and in several other places of the Bible.

But Jacob did not give the same privileges to any of the other sons of Joseph, if he had any; because he said, they should be called by the name of their brethren, Ephraim and Manasseh in their inheritance. But the Scriptures do not expressly inform us, that Joseph had any children but these two. You see by this, that Jacob put these two sons of Joseph in Joseph's place, for Joseph, by becoming an Egyptian subject, and the first minister of Pharaoh, could not take his share with his brethren in the nation of the Hebrews.

Although Manasseh and Ephraim were present all the time, and heard what their grandfather Jacob said he did not know it; for his eyesight was very dim on account of his age; so dim, that he could not recognize persons. After he had got through with this part of the business, he discovered that some persons were present, and asked Joseph who they were. Then Joseph told him they were his sons, whom God had given him in Egypt. Then Jacob told him to bring them up to him, so that he could lay his hands on their heads, and give them his blessing. Joseph then brought his sons up to the side of his bed, and his father embraced them and kissed them. The next thing Jacob said, shows how much it was his habit to

Jacob's

gratitude.

think of God's goodness to him, notwithstanding the many sorrows he had experienced. What he said was equivalent to this—"I thought"—that is, after the bloody coat had been brought home to him, "that I should never see thy face again, but I was wrong. God has brought it to pass, that I should not only see you, and live near you seventeen years, but should have the happiness of seeing your children and embracing them. How good and gracious God is !" We ought always to think, that an All-wise and beneficent Providence controls the actions and the conditions of men. Jacob's own life had been full of changes, and some of them were very sorrowful ; yet at last he saw, that the good hand of God had made him amends even in this life, for one of the greatest of his sorrows—the loss of his beloved Joseph.

During this time, the sons of Joseph must have stood very near to their grandfather, but Joseph drew them off from him a little, and took Ephraim by his right hand, and Manasseh by his left and stood with them, having their faces toward Jacob's face.

In this way Joseph made Ephraim stand toward Jacob's left hand, and Manasseh toward Jacob's right hand, and he expected that his father would lay his right hand on Manasseh's head, and his left hand on Ephraim's head, and so bless them.

Ephraim preferredto Manasseh.

But Jacob crossed his hands designedly, so that he laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, and his left hand on Manasseh's head. When Joseph saw this, he said, "not so, my father, for this (meaning Manasseh) is the first born, put thy right hand on his head."

Perhaps you may wonder, that Joseph should think it a matter of any consequence, which hand should be put on the head of either, but the right hand was considered among the Hebrews as the most honorable; and there are many places in the Bible, which can be explained only in this way. (1 Kings ii. 19; Ps. xlv. 10; Ps. cx. 5; Mark xiv. 62; Luke xxii. 69; Heb. i. 3; viii. 1; x. 12; xii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Acts vii. 55; Rom. viii. 34; Eph. i. 20; Col. iii. 1.) It had a real and important meaning, as many signs and symbols have. It is remarkable, however, that this is the first instance we meet with, of the practice which afterward became so common, of the laying of hands upon persons who are to be blessed, or set apart for any purpose. But it has come down even to our time. (See Gen. xxvii. 27, 28, 29.)

Jacob then blessed Joseph as the Bible informs us; but the words of blessing, which are preserved, apply to his two sons. Perhaps the meaning is, that Jacob blessed Joseph by blessing his two sons, because a blessing of the children is really a bless-

Joseph

acquiesces.

ing of the father. Nothing makes parents so happy as to see their children blessed. You should remember this. Jacob's words were these, "The God before whom my fathers walked," (that is, the God whom they worshiped and feared, and loved and served,) "Abraham and Isaac. The God who fed me from the day I was born, (or since I exist,) to this day. The angel who redeemed me from all evil;—may He bless the lads, that my name may be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and that they may multiply exceedingly in the midst of the land."

Some persons suppose that Jacob had said these words, before Joseph saw that he had crossed his hands, so as to place his left hand on Manasseh, and his right hand upon Ephraim; and that seeing this, Joseph felt so much concerned, that he interrupted his father in the midst of this solemn and religious act. The reason why they think Joseph did not see it before, is this: They suppose he was kneeling at the side of Jacob's bed between his two sons, when Jacob began to bless them. However this may be, when Joseph found his father did so purposely, he said no more, and Jacob finished his blessing, by adding these words—"In thee shall Israel bless, saying God make thee like Ephraim and like Manasseh." Other persons think, that

Import of

the blessing.

the conversation between Joseph and Jacob took place, before Jacob began to speak, just at the time when Jacob was about to put his hands on their heads. I do not know how that was; but if Joseph interrupted his father, it shows that he laid a very great stress upon the blessing, for he certainly would not interrupt his father in the midst of such an act, for any slight reason.

But the blessing was a very important matter, because it foretold the destiny of these two youths, and it was fulfilled in after ages, as we may learn from the Bible. It is a remarkable fact, that after the lapse of more than 3000 years, these words are still used by every Israelite father, when he blesses his child—"God make thee like Ephraim and like Manasseh," (Gen. xlviii. 20,) which shows that this saying of Jacob has been constantly fulfilled until this day.

After Jacob had thus adopted the two sons of Joseph, and given them a share in the land of Canaan, promised to him, and his blessing, he called to his bed-side all his sons, in order that he might tell them what would befall them in after times. When they came together, he began to prophecy about them, for God had given him the spirit of prophecy, by which he could foretell many of the things that God would bring to pass concerning them. What he said, is very remarkable and very

Jacob's chargeto his sons.

beautiful, but we will pass over this part of the history, and proceed now to the dying charge which he gave to all his sons, about his own burial.

A little while ago, I told you how Jacob required an oath of Joseph that he would not bury him in Egypt, but with his fathers in the land of Canaan. Now he says to all his sons, "I am about to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Machpelah, before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field, from Ephron the Hittite, for a burying-place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah—there they buried Isaac and Rebecca, and there I buried Leah." When Jacob had finished charging his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and expired, and was gathered to his people.

I wish you to observe how calmly this good old man spoke of his death. He believed, that after his body should be dead, his soul would be joined with his pious forefathers. He meant, that he should be re-united to his family. He did not say, "I am about to die," but he said, "I am about *to be gathered* to my people." It was said of Abraham and of Isaac, that they were gathered to their people. (Gen. xxv. 8; xxxv. 29.) You may also learn that Jacob believed his soul would not die with his body, from what he said, when Joseph's

Jacob's belief

in a future life.

coat was brought to him. I shall go down to my son mourning. (Gen. xxxvii. 35.) Certainly he did not mean that his dead body would be laid by the side of Joseph's dead body. Can you tell me why, William Ward?

William. Yes, sir; it is because he supposed that Joseph had been devoured by a wild beast.

Very well answered, William, and I will now tell you that king David also, had the same belief, because he said, when he lost a beloved child, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (2 Sam. xii. 23.) There are a great many sayings of good men in the Old Testament, which show that they all believed they should live after their bodies were dead and buried.* They also believed

* The immortality of the soul is taught in various parts of the Pentateuch, as in Gen. i. 26, 27, where it is said man was created in the *image of God*. This assertion necessarily implies, that man has an immortal soul, capable of happiness or misery without end, and that it cannot perish or be annihilated because, by its creation, it has life from God. The translation of Enoch, is another striking proof of the immortality of the soul. (Gen. xxiv. 22.) Other places may be referred to for the same purpose, as Gen. ii. 7.—iv. 7.—ix. 5.—xxv. 8.—xlix. 29, 33; Levit. xvii. 11.—xxvi. 15, 43; Deut. xii. 23, and see also Matt. xxii. 31, 32. The truth is, Moses takes for granted, the immortality of the soul, as he does some other truths. It has been remarked, that neither the New nor the Old Testament undertake to prove in a formal, direct and positive manner, either the doctrine of Providence, or the immortality of the soul, and the future life, or even the being of God. These truths are in every man's conscience, and constantly acted upon by mankind. Therefore it is, that they are assumed throughout the Bible, without other proof. (Rom. i. 19, 20; Gen. i. 1; Ps. xix. 1, 4.) The Israelites, to whom Moses committed his writings to be kept, certainly had no need of a formal proof of the being of God; for they had witnessed the miracles and wonderful works which God wrought for their deliverance from Egypt. (Exod. xx. 2.)

Socrates.Seneca.

that they would know their friends in the future life. Even wise men among the heathens had the same belief, though perhaps they learned it from the Hebrews. You have heard of Socrates.

Several. No, sir.

I thought you had. Well, I will tell you a little about him. He was a Grecian, and a very wise man. When he was condemned to die, he said to his judges, I am going to see again those estimable persons whom I have admired in this life. Seneca, who was a Roman, and another very wise man, wrote a letter to a mother who had lost her son, in which he said to her, "Go not to the tomb of thy son. That contains only the coarse cast-off covering, which was a burthen to him. His bones and his ashes no more made part of him than his clothing. He has wholly gone, without leaving any thing upon the earth. He has ascended to the height of the heavens—he hovers among the blessed souls. . . . There, although all men are relations, there your illustrious father embraces closely his grandson, resplendent with new light. He instructs him at the fountain of truth itself."

This is what even a heathen man said, who had not been taught the true religion. But we have the New Testament, which teaches us very plainly that our souls will live forever in another world. This is a very important lesson for you to learn.

An importantlesson.

Most boys and young persons do not think of this as they should. They are so pleased and taken up with the things of this life, that they seldom think of the future life. This is very unwise. They should not let a day go by, without thinking about the good of their immortal part, and trying to be prepared to die, if God should see fit to take them away, before they grow up to be men.

CHAPTER XIV.

Jacob's body

embalmed.

As soon as Jacob was dead, Joseph fell on his face and wept over him, and kissed him. It is a very sorrowful thing, for any one to lose his father, especially such a wise and good father as Joseph had, even when he is so old and infirm, that he can do nothing. Joseph then took care to have the body of his father embalmed. As he was a powerful man, he had a great many servants, among whom were physicians and embalmers. Perhaps you do not know, that the Egyptians had this peculiar custom—They did not permit, according to Herodotus, any physician to practice more than one branch of that profession. They made this regulation, in order that every physician might become as perfect as possible in the particular branch of the art he practiced. The art of embalming was carried to great perfection among the Egyptians. They preserved in that way, not only human bodies, many of which (called mummies) are to be seen at this day, but even birds and other animals.

Did you ever see a mummy?

Several. Yes, sir, at the corner of Broad street and George there are two or three.

The processof embalming.

Then you know how an embalmed body looks after a great length of time.

Herodotus and another historian called Diodorus, the Sicilian (or *Siculus*,) because he was born at Argyra in Sicily, (about a century or little less before the commencement of the Christian era,) gives some interesting particulars respecting the way in which embalming was performed, which some learned men in modern times have believed to be correct. I shall not attempt to describe to you particularly, how they embalmed a body. I will only tell you, that they cleansed it, in the first place, and then preserved it by myrrh, frankincense, salt and *natron*,* and then wrapped it up in broad bands of cotton soaked in gum-arabic. Diodorus Siculus says, it cost about a talent to embalm the dead body of a man, which is reckoned to be more than one thousand dollars of our money.

The Bible informs us, that it took forty days to embalm Jacob's body. Diodorus says, it commonly required that time to embalm a body; but Herodotus says, that seventy days were usually employed. He speaks of the art, however, as it was

*Natron or Anatron, is a kind of brownish salt, which is gathered from the Natron lakes in Egypt. It was formerly called Egyptian nitre. Natron is the German name for native carbonate of soda. It is probable, however, that the account given by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, of the process of embalming is defective, and that the interested selfishness of the Egyptian priests, concealed some ingredients which were indispensable.

Process of

embalming.

practiced at Thebes, in Upper Egypt,* where it is supposed, the process was more thorough than in other parts of Egypt. So you see it was a tedious

* This city (which has been already repeatedly mentioned,) suffered much by the invasion of Cambyses, the son of Cyrus and the second king of Persia, (529 B. C.) and from the ferocity of Ptolemy Philometer, (B. C. 135,) and finally it was destroyed by the Romans, during the reign of Augustus Cæsar, just before the commencement of the Christian era. It had reached the zenith of its might and glory in the time of Moses, or about 1400 years before the Christian era. Its temples and palaces are the mightiest specimens of architecture. Luxor and Carnac are near, and formed a part of the ancient city. Two rows of Sphinxes, beginning at the Nile, mark the way to the renowned temple of Carnac. These are succeeded by enormous gateways, or Pylons, towering above the other buildings of the valley. In the broad court was a range of high pillars (of which only one remains) extending to the second gate-way; before which stand two colossal statues. The great hall of the temple was surrounded by one hundred and thirty-three pillars to support the roof. In the midst of the hall is a row of twelve pillars, the largest to be found in Egypt. The masses of stone, once forming the roof, are now fallen and cover the floor. Other halls contain large obelisks. A row of Sphinxes conduct from Carnac to the Typhonium, or place of wicked spirits. Following another row of Sphinxes, the traveler is conducted in about half an hour to Luxor, where he finds the ruins of another magnificent temple, from the second gateway of which, there is a row of fourteen colossal figures, more than thirty feet in circumference; presenting a magnificent aspect from the opposite shore. The walls of the temple are richly adorned with sculpture. But the greatest triumph of art, is exhibited in the much-talked-of Memnonium, the plan of which has now been fully discovered by Erbkam. In the first court lie the ruins of the colossal granite statue of Rhamses the great. It measures twenty-one feet from shoulder to shoulder, and although in a sitting posture is probably thirty-five feet high. Behind the second hall, is an apartment containing about thirty very fine and highly polished pillars to support the roof; the ground of which is blue, ornamented with gold stars. "Whoever examines these mysterious relics of antiquity," says a modern traveler, "finds a perfection of art, of which before he could have had no idea, and even the smallest conveniences of household life, are exhibited with a neatness that our advanced age can scarcely surpass. These enormous ruins show how the greatest power of man must bow before the Almighty God. The Lord's threatening is accomplished: 'I will execute judgments in No,'—

Time of mourning

and of embalming.

process. During all the time the physicians and embalmers were embalming Jacob's body, the Egyptians mourned for him, and even thirty days longer; probably out of respect to Joseph. The time the children of Israel mourned for Aaron and Moses was only thirty days; (Numb. xx. 29; Deut. xxxiv. 8,) but the mourning for these persons, who were very great and good men, did not commence until after their funeral, whereas the mourning for Jacob included the time employed in embalming his body; and it may be, that when Herodotus speaks of seventy days employed in embalming a body, he includes thirty days for mourning. However this may be, seventy days seem long to mourn for the death of a stranger. Yet the mourning of the family continued still longer, as appears by the 10th verse of this 50th chapter.

When the public mourning in Egypt was ended, Joseph sent a request to the king to be permitted to leave the country and go to the land of Canaan to bury his father.* It may seem strange to you

(Thebes)—‘and I will cut off the multitude of No, and No shall be rent asunder.’ (Ezek. xxx. 14, 16.) ‘I will punish the multitude of No, and Pharaoh and Egypt, with their gods and kings.’ (Jer. xlv. 25.) ‘She was carried away; she went into captivity; her young children also, were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets and they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.’” (Nahum iii. 10.)

*The priests of Egypt esteemed it an abomination, for a person to quit his native country; for which reason, they never left it, thinking it inexcusable in any persons, excepting those who were obliged to go abroad for the service of the government by the king's appointment.

Joseph asks permission

to go to Canaan.

that Joseph himself did not go to Pharaoh to ask permission ; but this is explained by a custom which prevailed in the East, in early times, and probably in Egypt, at the time we are speaking of. You remember what I told you about the dress of persons in mourning, and their squalid, miserable appearance. Now, if you will turn to the 4th chapter of Esther, and the 2d verse, you will find it said, that no one might enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. The reason then, why Joseph *sent* his request to Pharaoh probably was, that he wore mourning garments, and had about his person other badges of mourning, which rendered it improper, according to the customs of Egypt, for him to appear before the king. The customs of the East are very much the same at the present day ; and it is very probable, that many of them,—and this among the rest,—have prevailed from the earliest ages. Now, I wish you to observe what Joseph said to the persons he sent. It was this : “ If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak I pray you, in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying,—My father made me swear, saying,—‘ Lo, I die. In my grave, which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me.’ Now, therefore let me go up, I pray thee and bury my father, and I will return.” Perhaps Joseph thought, that Pharaoh might fear he would not be willing to come back

Pharaoh consents toJoseph's going to Canaan.

to Egypt, if he let him go to Canaan, his former country, and that may be the reason, why he gave his promise, that he would return. You observe too, that Joseph did not put his request merely on the ground of his affection and duty to his father; but he told Pharaoh that his father made him take an oath, that he would bury him in Canaan. This shows again, how great power a father had over his children in those early times: even after they were grown up to be men; for here you see, Joseph was required by his father to take an oath, that he would do a thing, that he could not do, unless Pharaoh also would give his consent. But Joseph knew that Pharaoh would respect the obligation of the oath, and therefore he mentioned it. This shows that the oath has always been considered a very solemn thing, even among people, who had lost the true religion.* Even among the heathen of our own day, who worship false gods, the obligation of an oath is respected; and perhaps this belief has been handed down from Noah's day, and is a part of the religion which Noah professed. But however this may be, we see that Pharaoh respected it; for he sent this word to Joseph, "Go up and bury thy father, *as he made thee swear.*"

* The Romans, from the origin of their government, were most religious observers of the oath. The oath was, in fact, the sinew of their military discipline.

The burial

of Jacob.

Having obtained the permission of the king, Joseph prepared to set forth. His brethren and their wives, and their grown children; or as the Bible expresses it, "his father's house," except the little children, the servants, and their flocks and herds. Besides the family, many great men, who belonged to Pharaoh's court, and high officers, and some of the most respectable people joined the funeral train. They went also with chariots and horses or horsemen; so that this funeral company, when they were ready to move, looked like a great encampment. After they arrived in the land of Canaan, the funeral stopped in a plain, not far from Hebron. At this place, the whole company mourned for Jacob seven days more, and it was so remarkable a ceremony, that the people who lived near that place took notice of it, and gave the name *Abel Mizraim* to the place, which signifies, the mourning of the Egyptians. After the mourning was over, Jacob's sons buried his body in the cave of Machpelah, as he had commanded them.

Some suppose that Joseph took chariots and horsemen for protection, because it was not safe then, and would not be even now, for so rich a company to pass over the same route without an armed escort to protect them against robbers. Perhaps, however, the motive of the sacred histo-

Situation of

Abel Mizraim.

rian in giving us these particulars, was to show the great honor done to Jacob.

We do not certainly know where the place was, at which the funeral train stopped and mourned seven days. Moses says, it was *beyond Jordan*; and some persons think it was about three miles east of Jericho.* But it would be very absurd to suppose, that this large company would take such a roundabout way to go from Goshen to Hebron.† They had no occasion to go round the Dead Sea, or east of Jordan at all, and besides, Jericho is north-east of Jerusalem, and of course considerably further from Goshen than Hebron was. This you see by this map. But then Moses says, the place was “*beyond Jordan*,” and that makes the difficulty. Some persons take it for granted, that

* Jericho, the city of Palm trees, (Deut. xxxiv. 3,) is situated six or eight leagues east of Jerusalem in the plain of Jordan, and was one of the oldest cities in the Holy Land. It is mentioned in Josh. vi. 21, 26; Judges iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 4, 5; 1 Kings xvi. 34; 2 Kings ii. 19, 22; Ezra, ii. 34; Nehem. vii. 36; iii. 2; Luke xix. 1, 10; Matth. xx. 29; Mark x. 46. Under the Romans, Jericho was the second city of Palestine. It was laid waste by Vespasian, but rebuilt by Adrian. In the war of the Crusades, it was reduced to ashes, and its site is now occupied by a miserable hamlet called *Riha*. Joshua pronounced a curse upon the man who should first rebuild this city after its miraculous overthrow; (Josh. vi. 26;) and it lay in ruins about six centuries—until the time of Ahab and Elijah, the prophet; when Hiel, of Bethel, undertook to rebuild it; upon whom the prediction of Joshua was fulfilled. (1 Kings xvi. 34.) It was the malediction of Joshua which prevented, for so long time, the rebuilding of a city so agreeably and advantageously situated. This shows how firmly the Israelites believed in the divine authority of their laws and sacred writings.

† The distance from the borders of Egypt to Hebron, was nearly three hundred miles.

A Jewish

tradition.

Moses meant to say, it was on the east side of Jordan, and there may be the mistake. For when he wrote this history, (237 years afterward,) he was on the east side of Jordan—perhaps in the land of Moab; and he meant, therefore, that the place was on the side opposite to the place where he was, at the time he was writing, that is, on the west of Jordan. Now if you look on this map, you will find Abel Mizraim marked a little way south of Hebron, and east of Beersheba, which would not be much, if any, out of the way of this funeral procession. I hope you understand this explanation.

You may think it strange that the people of the country, should call this whole company Egyptians, when so large a part of them were born or had lived in that country. But you must remember, that Jacob's family left the country seventeen years before, and had taken up their residence in Egypt, and other people had occupied the land that they formerly lived upon. The Jews have a tradition, that one reason why Joseph took chariots and horses was, that the descendants of Esau, his uncle, claimed the cave of Machpelah, and that Joseph feared they would not allow him to bury his father in the cave. However this may be, the people of the country would be very likely to consider Jacob's sons as foreigners, after so long an absence.

Joseph

at Hebron.

Besides there were a great many native Egyptians in their company, and they might naturally enough call them all Egyptians. Let us now think a little about Joseph. Can you tell me, Walter, how old Joseph was at this time?

Walter. I think you told us, sir, that Joseph was about fifty-five or fifty-six years old when his father died.

I am glad you remember what I have told you so well. It shows that you have been attentive.

Now I will ask you another question. How long was it, since Joseph had seen Hebron? You may answer, George. He was seventeen years old when he was sold by his brethren, and he was fifty-five or fifty-six years old at the time we are speaking of. Take seventeen years from fifty-five years, and how many remains?

George. Thirty-eight years.

Then Joseph visited, on this mournful occasion, the place where he spent his childhood, after thirty-eight or thirty-nine years absence. It was no doubt pleasant to him to visit the place where he spent his boyhood, and perhaps it brought to his mind many things which he had almost forgotten. It is very natural for us to feel attached to the places, where we have lived happily and pleasantly, and there is no part of life that leaves so many pleasant recollections as childhood and youth. I

Fears of

Joseph's brethren.

doubt not, that many of you will hereafter look back to this place, and the time you are now spending here with great pleasure. I trust you will strive to improve your opportunities so well, that you will have no unpleasant recollections.

We have now nearly finished the history of Joseph, for although he lived fifty-four or fifty-five years after this, (Gen. l. 22,) and no doubt was a very important man as long as he lived, yet the Bible does not inform us what he did for the king, or in what sort of employments he was engaged.

After Joseph and his brethren had buried their father, they returned to Egypt, and then another circumstance occurred, which goes to show what a good man Joseph was; and what a troublesome thing an evil conscience is. The Bible informs us, that when Joseph's brethren saw their father was dead, they said, "Joseph perhaps may hate us and requite us all the evil, which we did unto him." Joseph's conduct toward them showed indeed, that they had no reason to be afraid of him. Yet how true it is, that a guilty conscience needs no accuser. They had lived in Goshen seventeen years, and he had shown himself very friendly to them all the while, and yet, as they could not forget their wicked conduct toward him, they thought, he could not forget it nor forgive it.

They felt so disturbed by this fear, that they

Their messageto Joseph.

sent a person to Joseph with this message—"Thy father did command before he died, saying, thus shall ye say to Joseph: Forgive, I pray thee now, the crime of thy brethren and their sin, though they did evil unto thee." "And now we pray thee, forgive the crime of the servants of the God of thy father."

Some think they sent this message to Joseph, immediately after the funeral was over, and before they went back to Egypt; so that they might stay in the land of Canaan, if they found he would not forgive them. But Moses tells us in the 14th verse, that they all went back to Egypt, and then he proceeds to tell us about this matter, as if it happened after their return. On this occasion, Joseph showed again his tender, pious and forgiving character, for he wept, when they spoke thus to him.

When they were told how he felt, they went to him and fell down before him, thus fulfilling his dream about the sheaves once more, and they offered to become his bondmen. As if they had said, we sold you as a slave, and now it is but right, that we should become your slave.

Some persons think that Jacob did not leave any such message for Joseph; because they think he knew Joseph too well, even to imagine that he had not forgiven them, or would do them any harm,

Joseph's

answer.

after he was dead ; and some think that Jacob was never made acquainted with the fact, that they had sold Joseph as a slave. But this is not probable. Yet if Jacob did leave such a message, probably it was not because he had any fear that Joseph would hurt his brethren, but because he thought it was proper they should, for their own sakes, ask his forgiveness. When any one does wrong to another and feels sorry for it, he ought to ask forgiveness, even if he knows the person he has injured has already forgiven him. But if Joseph's brethren invented this message, they did very wrong. No one has a right to invent a lie for any purpose. Yet it shows how strongly they all revered their father. It shows too, that they thought their father's command, even after his death, would protect them against their brother, great and powerful as he was, even if he felt unkindly to them. I think it probable, the brethren of Joseph were in Goshen, and that he was in the city of On, when they sent this message to him, and that after the messenger had returned, they went to On to ask his pardon, and make up with him. When Joseph saw them come into his presence and fall down before him, and heard them offer to become his slaves, he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. He said, "Fear not, am I in the place of God?" as if he had said, I cannot harm you if I

Joseph removestheir fears.

would. Do you not see God's providence in this matter? "Though you devised evil against me, God meant it for good, in order to accomplish, as at this day, the preservation of a numerous people."

Joseph had been the means of saving alive the Egyptian nation, and also his own father's family, which God had promised should become very numerous in after times. Now this was the proper way of considering the matter. The only thing which Joseph saw or regarded, was God's wisdom and work in his wonderful history. Pious persons, like Joseph, love to take large views of things; because they love to see God's work in every thing. But wicked men are apt to be narrow-minded, and to vent their spite at those who, they think, have done them harm, whenever they have the power and the opportunity. When Joseph had removed their fears, he promised to support them and their little ones. This shows that he was still a rich and powerful man. After this, as I told you, he lived fifty-four or fifty-five years—long enough to see the great grand-children of his youngest son. But Joseph did not live so long as some of his older brethren. Levi survived Joseph twenty-two years, and died at the age of 137. (Exod. vi. 16.) Levi and Joseph are the only two sons of Jacob, whose age is recorded in the Scriptures. Their manner of living was probably more healthful than his.

Joseph requires an oathof his brethren.

They lived in the country, and led quiet, peaceful lives ; but he lived in the royal city, and no doubt, had many perplexing cares.

When Joseph was about to die, he sent for his brethren, and told them that God would surely visit them and bring them out of Egypt, into the land which he promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They had then lived in Egypt about a half century, and had become settled inhabitants. It is evident also, from what Joseph said to them, they were not at liberty, after so long a residence to leave the country ; but like the natives, they could not go to other countries without the king's permission. This shows that the people of Egypt, were not so free as we are, in the United States. But Joseph assured them, that God would certainly appear in their behalf at some time, and bring them back to their own land again in spite of all the power of Egypt.

So sure was he of this, that he made them take an oath, that when they returned, they would carry up his bones with them. (Heb. xi. 22.) This shows, that notwithstanding his high dignity, he still considered it a foreign land. He did not know whether it would happen in their life-time or not ; but he knew their children would feel bound to fulfill the promise of their fathers, if made by an oath, and so they did ; for Moses, who was a de-

Joseph's bodyembalmed.

scendant of Levi, took care to take along with him the bones of Joseph ; (Exod. xiii. 19 ;) and Joshua, a descendant of Joseph's son Ephraim, eventually buried them at Shechem, (Josh. xxiv. 32,) the very place to which Joseph was sent by his father to see his brethren. And now, I wish you to observe how confidently Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph believed in God's faithfulness to give the land of Canaan to them, according to his promise. They seemed to have no more doubt about it, than about any thing they already saw, and had in their possession. You ought in the same way to believe all that God has said or promised.

After Joseph died, they embalmed his body and put it in a coffin, and no doubt, his body was preserved in that way, until it was taken away by Moses. It was the custom in Egypt to place the coffins or chests, in which embalmed bodies or mummies were put, in an inner chamber of the house, or in a vault contiguous to the house, and stand them upright against the wall. It is probable that Joseph's body was kept in this way, so that when the Bible informs us, that Moses took the bones of Joseph, (Exod. xiii. 19,) and that Joshua buried them, (Josh. xxiv. 32,) it means all his mortal remains. (2 Sam. xxi. 12, 14 ; 2 Kings xxiii. 14, 18, 20.) It was the embalmed body of Joseph then, and not merely his bones, Joshua buried in



Other actions

of Joseph.

Shechem in the parcel of ground, which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, near which place our Saviour conversed with the woman of Samaria. (John iv. 5.)

We have now come to the end of the History of Joseph, as it is recorded in the Bible. Yet I have no doubt, he did a great many things besides those contained in the Bible; because we have no reason to suppose that he did not continue to be the minister of the king, long after his father died, nor that he was not looked upon by the king and the people, as an Egyptian. If the history of Egypt, during his times had been preserved, we might learn what other great things he did.* No doubt, God pre-

* We are told that in the neighborhood of Memphis, antiquities abound, bearing the name of Joseph. Among these are the following:—The hall of Joseph in the castle of Grand Cairo, which is supported by thirty massive pillars of Theban stone. The ceiling still exhibits fine Mosaic work; it is enriched with gold and azure. Joseph's well—which is one of the greatest curiosities of Egypt. In Old Cairo are granaries, which the inhabitants assert, are the identical store-houses, where Joseph laid up corn, in preparation for the approaching famine. Whether this be correct or not, it is a circumstance which would tend to confirm—if confirmation were necessary—the authenticity and accuracy of the sacred writings. There is also a canal, connected with lake Mœris, which a tradition of the country ascribes to Joseph. It is an admirable work, and is actually called *Bahr-Yousef*. The lake is about 3,600 *stadia* in circumference, which is a little more than sixty French leagues. The canal commences near Hermopolis, (Achmounein) and runs about four French leagues westwardly; and then turning, it runs from south toward the north, to Fayoum. That part of the canal which runs westwardly, Diodorus describes as the canal of communication, and says it is about eighty *stadia* or three French leagues in length. It is doubtful, however, whether this work was constructed by Joseph. Others ascribe it to king Mœris; the same king who formed the large lake, which bears his

The birth

of Moses

served him in power, and gave him influence for the sake of protecting his brethren and their families, so that they might prosper and grow into a great nation. Some time after his death, however, things began to change—although we do not know precisely how soon. But it is not likely that Joseph would be forgotten, as soon as he died, by those who knew him and remembered how much good he had done to the country. Yet when Moses, the great grandson of Levi,* was born, which was about *sixty-four* years after Joseph's death, and forty-two years after Levi's death, there was another king on the throne, who knew not Joseph,

name. This canal, when in operation, conducts to the lake the waters of the Nile when it begins to overflow, and other canals conduct again into the Nile, the superabundant waters, the lake has thus received. Lake Mœris is now called *Birket-êl Qaroun*. It is now reduced from sixty to about thirty French leagues in circumference. There was another canal which commenced at the village of Phaccusa, ascribed by Herodotus to Nechus, but by others to Sesostris; from this village it ran east and south-east, and after taking a great circumference, entered the Red Sea near Heroopolis. It was a vast work, reaching above one hundred miles—made with immense labor and expense, and is said to have cost the lives of one hundred and twenty thousand persons. (Herodotus, Book ii. chap. 158.) Strabo says, it was a hundred cubits wide and of a depth sufficient for a first rate ship.

* The mother of Moses was the daughter of Levi. (Exod. ii. 1.) His father's name was Amram, and his paternal grandfather's name was Kohath, who was one of the sons of Levi. (1 Chron. vi. 1—3.) Learned men say, that Levi was born when Jacob was 82 years old; that Kohath was born when Levi was 47 years old, and that Amram was born when Kohath was 75 years old. It is supposed also, that Kohath lived 133 years, and Amram 137 years; but the years of the birth and death of Amram cannot be precisely known. Kohath must have died at least 83 years before the exode, and at least three years before the birth of Moses. Levi lived in Egypt 88 years.

The Hebrewsoppressed.

and was not inclined to treat the Hebrews kindly for Joseph's sake. Some persons think this king was not a native of Egypt, but a foreigner who had conquered the country. However that may be, all the brethren of Joseph were dead, at that time, and all the men who knew Joseph and respected him. (Exod. i. 68.) The Hebrews were greatly oppressed by this new king. They were made to do all kinds of hard work—their male children were cruelly murdered by his command; their condition, indeed, was that of slavery. This is proved by what God himself said, when he gave them the ten commandments. For at that time, he thus described himself: "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, *out of the house of bondage.*" (Exod. xx. 2.)

But these facts more properly belong to the history of Moses, than to that of Joseph. Before I quite close this story, I will give you a few dates to remember, which will help you much in the study of ancient history. You will find some of them in the tables I made for you.

Abraham was born 1996 years before Christ.

Isaac was born 1895 years before Christ.

Jacob and Esau were born 1836 years before Christ.

Joseph was born 1745 years before Christ.

Moses was born 1571 years before Christ.

Dates of some

important events.

Abraham died 1823 years before Christ.

Isaac died 1715 years before Christ.

Jacob died 1689 years before Christ.

Joseph died 1635 years before Christ.

Moses died 1451 years before Christ.

Moses wrote the Pentateuch 1452 years before Christ, or just before he died. Now, I wish you to add to each of these dates 1848, and then you will be able to tell me how long ago, each one of these events happened. How long ago, William Warp, was Abraham born?

Add 1996 to 1848—How many do they make?

William. 3844 years.

How long ago was Moses born?

Add 1571 to 1848.

William. 3419 years.

How long was it between the birth of Abraham and the birth of Moses?

Subtract 1571 from 1996.

William. 425 years.

In this way you will learn that the history we have been studying was written 3300 years ago, and that Joseph died 3483 ago, or 64 years before the birth of Moses, and 184 years before the death of Moses.

But in order to give you a better idea of the great antiquity of our subject, you shall have a few dates from profane history. When Moses was

Dates in

profane history.

about fifteen years old, an Egyptian, whose name was Cecrops, went to Greece, and laid the foundation of Athens, which was afterward so famous. This was 1556 years before the birth of Christ. But Corinth, another famous city of Greece, was not founded till Moses was 51 years old, which was 1520 years before the birth of Christ.

You have been told that Greece was very celebrated in ancient times, for its philosophers, orators, historians and poets. Yet at the time we are speaking of, even the letters of the alphabet were not known in Greece; for, as learned men inform us, the letters of the alphabet were first carried into Greece 1519 years before the birth of Christ, and at that time only sixteen letters had been invented. At that time also, Moses was 52 years old. The famous Trojan war did not begin till 442 years after the death of Joseph; and Homer, the famous Grecian poet, lived nearly 700 years after the death of Joseph. The city of Rome was founded 883 years after the death of Joseph, or 752 years before the birth of Christ. Thus you see, that almost all the history we have, except that contained in the Book of Genesis, relates to things which have happened since the death of Joseph.

But the Chinese, Assyrian and Babylonian empires, are supposed by many, to have been founded about 570 years, and Egypt about 550 years, be-

The Bible containsthe earliest history.

fore the death of Joseph. Sicyon, (which is supposed to have been the first kingdom ever founded in Greece,) and Argos were also founded before the death of Joseph—the former 454 years, and the latter 221 years before that event. Yet we know very little of the true history of these kingdoms or places in those early times; so that what I told you at the beginning of this story, is true, namely: that the Bible contains the only true history we have, of the first ages of the world, and this is also true of the first ages after the flood.

As you now know this, I hope you will feel a greater interest in studying the Bible, and especially a stronger desire to study the history of one of the greatest and most extraordinary men that ever lived—I mean the history of Moses.

THE END.

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From the North American and Gazette, July 29, 1850.

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Philadelphia, June 22, 1850.

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constitutes a link between Religion and Natural Science—studies which have hitherto been as isolated as if they were incompatible with each other.

From the North American and Gazette.

This is a work of such established character, and it has obtained so much favor and popularity with the religious reading public that it would seem superfluous to add to its praise. We may repeat, however, the opinion of a friend, a scientific gentleman, of this city, of the highest European as well as American reputation, who says of Dr. S.'s book that it is "one of the most instructive volumes that has issued from the press since the revival of letters." Mr. Peterson's edition is a handsome one, with clear, large type, and it is reprinted from the fourth London edition, greatly enlarged.

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We are very well pleased to see the reprint of this well known work, now in its fourth edition abroad; for although the learned author has pushed his speculations beyond our views of fact, he has a profound reverence for divine revelation, and maintains that geology attests the truth of the divine word. His works are therefore worthy of being studied by those who are desirous of pursuing inquiry in the regions of speculation with a safe guide.

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From the *Saturday Evening Post*, July 6, 1850.

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The book itself is got up in a plain, substantial, serviceable style, calculated for use rather than ornament—and we predict will soon become, in fact as well as in name, the *National Cook Book*.

From the Dollar Newspaper.

This is the best bound and most handsomely printed of all the cook books that have yet come under our notice, and what is more important for the great majority of those for whom it is intended, its recipes are more practical and better adapted to the circumstances and conveniences of housekeepers than any other. They are generally drawn up in a concise and simple manner, and so plainly worded, that those least skilled in cooking, may comprehend them. It thus avoids the great defect of similar works, which often so mystify, by the use of French, and other unusual terms, that plain people are oftener perplexed than instructed in their perusal. Another commendable quality of this volume is, the recipes are adapted to utensils in common use in almost every family. We are quite sure our lady readers will like it.

From Sartain's Magazine.

THE NATIONAL COOK BOOK.—By a Lady of Philadelphia.—“The proof of the pudding is in the eating,” says the proverb. By analogy, the proof a cook-book is in the cooking, and we are prepared, by sweet experience, to say that a fruit-cake “baked after one of the receipts in the National Cook-Book,” is one of the finest of its kind we have ever tasted. Of the general merits of the “National Cook-Book,” it is not meet that we, personally should have an opinion, but we are instructed by the “power behind the throne,” who has been studying it, to say that in *her* opinion, it is more practically useful for ordinary housekeepers than any she has seen.

From Scott's Weekly Paper, August 3. 1850.

THE NATIONAL COOK BOOK.—The ladies of our household have been testing the recipes in this book for the past month, and they agree in pronouncing it the very best practical cook book that ever came under their notice. They have tried many, but to the National Cook Book they award high praise for the economy and excellence of its recipes.

From the Morning Post, (Pittsburgh) July 9, 1850.

Here is a book for the ladies, worth a thousand magazines filled with fashion plates. Nothing makes home more happy and comfortable than a pleasant wife and a well cooked meal. Let husbands, who are fond of wholesome living, buy this book for their wives.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer, June 19, 1850.

THE NATIONAL COOK BOOK.—Mr. R. E. Peterson, N. W. corner of Fifth and Arch streets, has just published a volume with this title. It is by a Lady of Philadelphia, a practical housewife, and contains no less than 578 recipes for making and cooking soups, fish, vegetables, sauces, pastry, sweet dishes, cakes, preserves, medicines for the sick, and miscellaneous preparations. The work is the result of many years experience; and the author has

endeavored to furnish the information in the most precise and simple form, and in all cases has sacrificed style to minute detail. This Cook Book is *decidedly one of the best publications of the class that has ever appeared*, and from its plain, practical and comprehensive character, it cannot but prove eminently successful. Every housekeeper should possess a copy.

THE BOOK OF CAGE BIRDS,

BY HENRY B. HIRST.

4th edition—1 vol. 12mo. cloth, 75 cts.

The following Advertisement to the first edition, is from the pen of the late Bernard Duke, the favorably known seedsman:

"The following work the publisher presents to the public with feelings of considerable gratification. That the want of a good publication of this description has long been severely felt he is well aware from the many inquiries at his establishment. Upon discovering this, he immediately took measures to insure the production of a complete and practical treatise on the various birds which are to be found, singly and collectively in an American Aviary.—The book is written by a gentleman well known as one of the best practical Ornithologists of the day. This fact must give to the directions on its pages the fullest credit and reliance. The portion devoted to the Canary Bird (*Fringillaserinus*) is the most perfect description of its character and habits ever published; while the remainder displays the most correct judgment and scientific knowledge.

From M^{rs} Makin's Model Courier, July 6, 1850.

The third edition of this scarce and popular book has been issued by R. E. Peterson, corner of Arch and Fifth streets, who has purchased of the widow of the late Bernard Duke, the whole work, including the valuable copyright. Our readers who take any interest in the sweet songsters, generally know that the author of "The Book of Cage Birds," is our well-known poet, Henry B. Hirst, Esq. That gentleman—a true sportsman, for all seasons—is perhaps the best bird fancier in the country, and abundantly able to treat of birds as birds deserve to be treated. It is a complete practical treatise on the various birds which are to be found, singly or collectively, in an American aviary. Particular attention is, we perceive, bestowed upon that general favorite, the Canary bird, and every thing in relation to their habits, treatment, &c., is set down in detail. In short, every bird that delights the eye, charms the ear, or ministers to a dainty appetite, is here exhibited in the author's most simple, captivating style.

MEMORANDA
OF THE
LIFE OF JENNY LIND.
BY N. PARKER WILLIS.
WITH PORTRAIT.

12mo. Cloth, 75 cents.

From the *Saturday Evening Post*.

These memoranda of the charming singer comprise all that can be collected of her eventful life, from the time when she was a poor little neglected girl in Stockholm, up to her present splendid position, the object probably of more homage and flattery than any other woman in the world. The particulars of such unprecedented success are necessarily interesting, and they have here an able chronicler. We commend the book as one that will satisfy the curiosity of those who want to know all about Jenny Lind. A well-engraved portrait of Jenny in "*La Sonnambula*," adds to the attractiveness of the work.

From the *Baltimore Patriot*.

MEMORANDA OF THE LIFE OF JENNY LIND. By N. Parker Willis. Philadelphia: published by Robert E. Peterson.

This is a sketch of Jenny Lind by one whose admiration is boundless. Every body knows how Willis can write of what he likes. He gives an account of her life almost from her birth up to the present time; her career in Europe and the reception she has had in this country; introducing anecdotes and letters, and criticisms on her singing; and making in all respects a most readable and entertaining book.

From the *Southern Literary Gazette*.

MEMORANDA OF THE LIFE OF JENNY LIND. By N. P. Willis. Philadelphia: Robert E. Peterson. 1851.

A book about Jenny Lind, by Willis, is sure to sell, whether it possess striking merits or not. This handsome little volume is, however, a collection of the chief incidents in the unparalleled career of the Lind, in the happiest manner of the Editor, and this is saying much for the volume, since Willis is pre-eminent as a literary gossip. It certainly possesses a merit beyond that of any sketch of her life we have met with. Mr. Willis' volume has a fine mezzotint engraving of Jenny, in the Prayer from "*Sonnambula*."

From the *Christian Observer*.

This work from the pen of an accomplished writer, is one of the few books of the age, that need no commendation to public favor. The name of Jenny Lind, her wondrous power in song, and the interest every where felt in her behalf, will give this volume a ready passport to the hands and hearts of thousands.

Rec. 24 June, 1851.

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